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THE SONG OF THE REED.

**PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.
EDINBURGH AND LONDON**

THE
SONG OF THE REED
AND
Other Pieces.

BY
E. H. PALMER,
LORD ALMONER'S PROFESSOR OF ARABIC, CAMBRIDGE.



LONDON:
TRÜBNER & CO., LUDGATE HILL.
1877.

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I.

Pieces from the Persian and Arabic.

A

THE SONG OF THE REED.

FROM THE "MASNAVL"



LIST to the reed, that now with gentle strains
Of separation from its home complains.

Down where the waving rushes grow
I murmured with the passing blast,
And ever in my notes of woe
There live the echoes of the past.

My breast is pierced with sorrow's dart,
That I my piercing wail may raise;
Ah me ! the lone and widowed heart
Must ever weep for bye-gone days.

My voice is heard in every throng
Where mourners weep and guests rejoice,
And men interpret still my song
In concert with their passions' voice.

Though plainly cometh forth my wail,
 'Tis never bared to mortal ken ;
As soul from body hath no veil,
 Yet is the soul unseen of men.

Not simple airs my lips expire,
 But blasts that carry death or life,
That blow with love's tempestuous fire,
 That rage with love's tempestuous strife.

I soothe the absent lover's pain,
 The jealous suitor's breast I move ;
At once the antidote and bane,
 I favour and I conquer love.

So sings the reed, but its mysterious song
No ear attuned to harmony devours ;
Music that doth not to the age belong
Dies out symphonious with the dying hours.
Tastes are proportioned to the natural powers ;—
None but the fishes revel in the stream,
And none take pleasure in these words of ours
Whose hearts are strangers to the heavenly beam.
Peace ! it were better we should seek another theme.

Take back this goblet, boy,—thy boasted wine
Sparkles less brightly than our sparkling wit.

Nay ! we succumb not to the drink divine,
'Tis we that steal away the sense of it.
“ We live and die,” ye say. It were more fit
To say that we ourselves are life and death :
Here is the very rock on which ye split—
Matter and spirit. But I waste my breath ;
The ears of deaf men hear not what the preacher saith.

Wherefore, blind captives, will ye hug your chain,
And bless the net that doth your limbs enfold ?
Why will ye live the slaves of loss and gain,
And barter precious liberty for gold ?
What though your water-jar the ocean hold ?
'Tis but the scanty pittance of a day
Compared with long Eternity. Behold !
Fast as ye fill, the waters waste away ;
Seek then the fount of Love, for Love flows on for aye.

Even the lowly earth hath dared to rise,
For that in Love she taketh such delight,
And sits enthroned above the darkling skies,
Gazing for ever on His rising light.
Moses erewhile fell fainting at the sight
Of that fierce flame descended from above,
Which thrilled the very mountains with affright,
And made grey Sinai's firm foundations move ;—
'Twas but a scintillation from the fire of Love.

How shall I hope to make my meaning plain,
Who sing thus faintly as the rushes moan ?
Ah me ! the sweetest singer sings in vain,
Unless the language of his song be known.
The garden's beauty has for ever flown,
No perfumed odours float upon the air,
But the sad nightingale, who sits alone
Upon the rose-tree, singeth still how fair
The tender blossoms and the sweet young flow'rets
were.

Nature's great secret let me now rehearse—
Long have I pondered o'er the wondrous tale,
How Love immortal fills the universe,
Tarrying till mortals shall His presence hail ;
But man, alas ! hath interposed a veil,
And Love behind the lover's self doth hide.
Shall Love's great kindness prove of none avail ?
When will ye cast the veil of sense aside,
Content in finding Love to lose all else beside ?

Love's radiance shineth round about our heads
As sportive sunbeams on the waters play ;
Alas ! we revel in the light He sheds
Without reflecting back a single ray.

The human soul, as reverend preachers say,
Is as a mirror to reflect God's grace ;
Keep, then, its surface bright while yet ye may,
For on a mirror with a dusty face
The brightest object sheweth not the faintest trace.

STORY OF THE KING AND THE MAIDEN.

FACTS may perchance more eloquently speak,
When Love by language cannot be defined,
When verses fail, and words are all too weak ;
Wherefore give ear with an attentive mind.
A mighty monarch, (so the tale I find
In ancient writings), on a summer's day
Rode forth to chase the nimble-footed hind ;
But in a forest where he chanced to stray,
Love's treacherous toils were spread, and he became
the prey.

A lovely maiden by a cottage door
With sudden passion fired his amorous breast ;
The girl was coy, but then her sire was poor,
And she ambitious ;—Need I tell the rest,
How both soon yielded to the King's request ?
But human pleasures so uncertain are,
Soon that fair maid lay sick and sore distressed ;
So doth one oft seek water from afar,
And having found it, straightway break his water-jar.

The chief physicians of the country round
Came to the court to exercise their skill ;
But those whose practice was the most renowned,
In this case, strange to say, succeeded ill :
For simple, drench, electuary, and pill
Served but to heighten the fair maid's disease ;
And inasmuch as boastful man's "I will !"
Avaleth nought without "If Allah please !"
The learned doctors failed to give the damsel ease.

When his beloved could get no relief,
The King did straightway to the mosque repair,
To make atonement and pour out his grief
To Him who only could remove his care ;
And as he lay upon the pavement there,
With sighs and weeping his appeal he urged.
When on Love's waters he had cast his prayer,
That sea divine with sympathy upsurged,
And from its troubled waves a halcyon form
emerged.

An ancient man, with garments snowy white,
Appeared before his fascinated eyes,
And said : "Thou hast found favour in the sight
Of Allah, wherefore I command thee rise
And wait the issue." In intense surprise,

The royal suppliant to his feet upstarted :
He had laid down to sleep in woful guise,
Slave of a slave-girl, wan and broken-hearted ;
He rose a King, and to his home departed.

Next morn a stranger to the palace came,
An ancient man, but dignified in mien ;
His face, his snowy garb, the very same
Which erst the King had in his vision seen.
But little tarrying made the King, I ween,
To ask his errand ; but, obeisance made,
He led the way, and passed behind the screen
Into the chamber where the beauteous maid,
Like a bruised lily, on her bed of pain was laid.

A hasty glance that strange physician threw
Upon the maid, and speedily divined
The secret source of all her ills, and knew
That hers was but a sickness of the mind,
A broken heart, that only Love could bind.
No words he spake, but motioned with his head
That all should go forth leaving him behind ;
Then sat him down beside the maiden's bed,
And to the theme of Love the conversation led.

Gently he took her hand within his own,
And bade her tell the sorrows of her heart ;

But she, persisting there was nought to own,
Parried his questions with a woman's art,
Nor of her history would one word impart.
Then spake he to her of her native land,
Yet did no tear-drop at the mention start,
'Till at the last, while yet he held her hand,
He whispered in her ear the name of Samarcand.

Scarce had he uttered that beloved name,
Ere the weak pulse which in his hand he held
Throbbed with quick beats, her colour went and
came,
While to her lustrous eyes the tear-drops welled,
And her fair bosom with emotion swelled.
“O Samarcand !” she cried, and wept full sore,
For now the secret could not be withheld,
“Shall I behold thy Ghátifar no more,
Where my brave goldsmith dwelt in happy times of
yore !”

Bidding her dry her tears, the sage withdrew,
And, with these strange unwelcome tidings fraught,
Rejoined the King, who, when the facts he knew,
Held his own bosom's happiness as naught
Compared with hers he loved ; nor did a thought
Of jealous meanness rankle in his breast,
But for a trusty messenger he sought,

And charged him straightway to depart in quest
Of him whose absence robbed that fair young maid
of rest.

The simple goldsmith, easily deceived
By the fair promises that envoy made,
Set out upon his journey, and believed
The treacherous voice within his breast which said,
“ Now shalt thou join thine own beloved maid,
Now doth thy sleeping luck at length awake ! ”
Alas ! he knew not he had been betrayed,
That 'twas 'Azrā'el's gloomy self that spake,
And urged him on this fatal step with joy to take.

With her young lover once more at her side
The girl recovered, and the longed-for day
That should transform her to a happy bride
Was drawing nigh ; when, to their great dismay,
The youth in turn upon a sick-bed lay,
His manly beauty and the roseate hue
Of health and freshness faded all away,
And she who erst had panted for the view
Shuddered to look on him, so weak and wan he grew.

A deadly potion had wrought all this ill,
By that physician secretly prepared ;

For well he knew, in his mysterious skill,
That the fair maid had been by beauty snared,
And for the youth without it nothing cared.
Poor lad ! his fair face brought him all this pain !
But thus with many another has it fared ;
The peacock's plumage proves the creature's bane,
And for his pomp and power is many a monarch
slain.

She who for love of him had well-nigh died,
Unmoved at last beheld him pass away.
“ To-day Death marks me for its own,” he cried,
“ To-morrow ye in turn shall be its prey !
Shadows move on, but each returning day
Upon their former places are they found.
Life is a rock, and all we do or say
Is echoed back ; for rocks re-echo sound,
And Nature ever moves in one unvarying round.”

Herein behold a wondrous mystery :
The simple Soul hath wasted all her love
On earthly things that fade away and die,
Nor heedeth aught of better things above,
Till Reason smites the idol down, to prove
How foul may be the thing for which she prays.
Ye know not how the immortal counsels move,

And, yet ye say this is no just God's ways,—
He heals the maid, 'tis true, but her beloved He slays.

So when that ancient Prophet Khizr slew
A youth, though unprovoked by word or deed,
Not even Moses, Heaven's own spokesman, knew,
That Heaven's justice caused the lad to bleed.
All ye who move in one small sphere, take heed
That ye judge not of things beyond your ken,
As did the Bagdad parrot. You may read
The tale again, for there are moments when
Even a parrot, as oft they do, may preach to men.

THE PARROT OF BAGDAD.

—o—

IN far-famed Bagdad, in a druggist's shop,
There lived a parrot,—such a clever bird,
That passengers in the bazaar would stop
To hear him. He could utter every word
Of the “First Chapter.” I have even heard
That the Imam was seriously vexed
Because the parrot's reading was preferred
To his own services, on this pretext,
That Polly threw so much more feeling in the text.

One day a cat, intent upon a mouse,
Caused the poor parrot a tremendous fright
By dashing unawares into the house.
Extremely disconcerted at the sight,
Our parrot spreads its wings, and taking flight
Upwards toward the ceiling, straight proposes,
Aloft and out of danger, to alight
Upon a shelf where stood some oil of roses,
Destined for Beys' and Pashas' plutocratic noses.

He gained the shelf, but, in his haste, alas !
Upset the bottles with a dreadful crash.
His master turned, and saw the gilded glass,
With all its precious contents, gone to smash ;
And being a man by nature rather rash,
And apt to be by quick impulses led,
He seized his pipe-stem, made a sudden dash
At the offender, struck him on the head,
And stretched him on the ground to all appearance
dead.

He was not killed, but from that very day
A change came over the unlucky brute ;
His crest and topmost feathers fell away,
Leaving him bald as the proverbial coot.
But worse than that, he had become quite mute ;
That pious language for which heretofore
The folks had held him in such high repute—
His quips and jokes, were silenced, and no more
Attracted crowds of buyers round the druggist's door.

Alike in vain the wretched druggist tries
To make him speak by foul means and by fair ;
Even a mirror held before his eyes
Elicits nothing but a vacant stare.
When all else failed, the druggist took to prayer,

And then to cursing ; but it did no good,
For Heaven refused to meddle in the affair.
'Tis strange that men should act as though they
could
Cajole or frighten Heaven into a yielding mood.

At length, when he had given the matter up,
There came an old man in a Dervish cloak,
With head as bare as any china cup ;
Whereon the bird, who always liked a joke,
Chuckles aloud, his sulky silence broke
For the first time since the untoward event,
And thus in sympathising accents spoke,
Though with an air of ill-disguised content :—
“ Holloa, old boy ! have you upset your master's
scent ? ”

He carried his analogy too far,
And so do more than half the world beside ;
They say that such things are not or they are,
And on experience alone decide.
Thus the immortal Abdals, who preside
Over the spheres, can be perceived of few,
Yet their existence cannot be denied ;
And of two things submitted to their view,
Men still receive the false one and reject the true.

Two insects on the self-same blossom thrive,
Equal in form and hue and strength of wing,
Yet this one brings home honey to the hive,
While that one carries nothing but a sting.
So from one bank two beds of rushes spring,
Drawing their moisture from the self-same rill,
Yet, as the months the alternate seasons bring,
The stalks of one kind will with sugar fill,
The other kind will be but hollow rushes still.

Soil, whether rich or poor, is one to see :
Two men may be alike in outward show,
Yet one an angel and a friend may be,
And one a devil and a mortal foe :
Two streams may in the self-same valley flow,
With equal clearness may their waters run,
But he who tastes of them alone may know
Which is the sweet and which the bitter one ;
For nought is what it seems of all things 'neath the
sun.

A prophet's miracles, when brought to test,
Will conquer the magician's vain pretence ;
And yet alike the claims of either rest
On contravening our experience,

And foiling our imperfect human sense.
Behold, when Israel's freedom is at stake,
Moses throws down his rod in their defence ;
Their rods, too, Pharaoh's skilled magicians take,
Nor is the difference seen till his becomes a snake.

See how the tricksy ape will imitate
Each human being he may chance to see,
And fancy, in his self-conceited pate,
“I do this action quite as well as he.”
Thus does the sinner oftentimes bend the knee,
And in the mosque prefer his sad complaint,
Till in his own eyes he appears to be
No whit less pious than the humble saint—
Ay ! and the world believes his sanctimonious feint.

You call him saint, and he is well content
To be a hardened sinner all the same ;
But call him sinner, he will straight resent
The insult, and repudiate the name,
As though 'twere in the word that lay the shame,
And not in him to whom the name applies.
The senseless pitcher should not bear the blame
When in the well itself the foulness lies—
But man still seeks to cheat his own and others' eyes.

I saw a man who laid him down to sleep
Beside a fire one cold and wintry night,
When lo ! a burning cinder chanced to leap
Out of the hearth and on his lips alight ;
Whereat he started up in sudden fright,
And spat it out, and roared aloud with pain.
Without perceiving them, that luckless wight
Had swallowed cinders o'er and o'er again,
But the first one that burnt him made its presence plain.

To save the body from what harms or kills,
Wise Providence this sense of pain employs ;
So, too, the spirit's various griefs and ills
May prove at last a stepping-stone to joys.
In earthly pain this hope the sufferer buoys,
That skilful leeches make the body whole ;
But when some overpow'ring grief destroys
Our peace, we fly to Him who heals the soul—
Who holds both life and death in His supreme control.

Physicians mend whate'er has gone amiss,
To give sick men relief from present woe :
He overturns the crumbling edifice
That He may build it up again—as though
A man his dwelling-place might overthrow,
And find a treasure where the cottage stood

With which to build a palace ;—even so
To cleanse the river-bed you dam the flood—
To heal the wound you pare the flesh that taints the blood.

But how shall we define the Infinite ?
How shall we fix each fresh and varying phase
That flits for aye across our baffled sight,
And makes us faint and giddy as we gaze ?
Yet with his call the fowler oft essays
To bring the errant hawk within his reach ;
So, when men wander in life's devious ways,
The Dervish too may utter human speech,
And in mere mortal words immortal truths may teach.

Ye who would search into the truth, beware
Of false instructors, who assume the name
Of Dervish, and the woollen garment wear
Only to hide their inward sin and shame,
Like false Museilima, who dared to claim
The honours due to Ahmed's self alone,
Till in God's time the retribution came.
Good wine and bad are by their perfume known,
And only in results are truth and falsehood shown.

THE JEWISH VIZIER.

ONCE on a time there lived a king—a Jew,
Who held so firmly by the ancient law,
That nought could make him recognise the new :
In Moses and in Jesus he but saw
Rivals, and knew not that those planets draw
Their borrowed light from God's all-glorious sun.
He in whose eyesight there should be a flaw
Seeth two objects where there is but one—
Alas ! that perfect senses are vouchsafed to none.

The monarch's Vizier, a soft-spoken man,
Thus gave him counsel :—"Sire, the common weal
Profiteth nothing by thy present plan ;
Putting the Christians down by fire and steel
But makes the misbelieving dogs conceal
Their strange beliefs while holding to them still :
I have a deeper project to reveal,
Whereby these Christians shall each other kill,
And on the impious brood the King shall have his will.

“I will stand up before thy majesty
And plead in this oppressed folk’s defence,
Whereat thou shalt in seeming choler be,
As who would punish me for such offence ;
But lest they gauge the depths of our pretence,
Nor give us credence, do not hold thy hand,
But maim and torture me with violence,
And on my forehead set a shameful brand,
And drive me forth with ignominy from the land.”

The King agreed, and drove the Vizier forth
As one in tribulation and disgrace.
The Christians, deeming him a man of worth,
A martyr to his kindness for their race,
Gave him a shelter and the foremost place
In their assemblies ; nay, his advent there
Seemed like an earnest of fresh heavenly grace.
Alas ! they knew not that his words so fair
Would prove nought else but a delusion and a snare.

O God ! our pathway is with snares beset,
And we, borne earthward by our sensual greed,
Like birds are tangled in the fowler’s net ;
Again our spirits by Thy hand are freed,
Again, lust-lured, into the toils we speed.
We catch the mice that rob our threshing-floor

With traps and springes, but we take no heed
Though each day pilfers from our heavenly store,
And opportunities are lost for evermore.

The steel once smitten many a brilliant spark
Emits, and these the willing heart receives,
When lo ! the thief approaches in the dark
And puts the sparks out one by one, and leaves
The heart all unillumined. But the thieves
Are powerless, Lord, if only Thou art nigh ;
If Thou art with us, Lord, no snare deceives ;
And though a thousand in our pathway lie,
Not one can e'er escape the heaven-directed eye.

Thy hand of power doth every night set free
Unnumbered souls from their corporeal snares,
And prisoners taste the sweets of liberty,
And emperors shake off their imperial cares.
Such is the semblance which the Dervish wears,
“Asleep yet waking,” to the eyes of men.
Each natural law a false construction bears ;
The hand that writes it is unseen, and then
The world ascribes the action to the moving pen.

When deepest slumber doth the sense enfold,
Into the desert of the infinite

Men's spirits wander free and uncontrolled ;
But when the morning, armèd for the fight,
With golden buckler and with sword of light,
Drives off his dusky foeman, Night, the herd
Of souls return to their accustomed site :
Then is the falconer's shrill whistle heard,
And to his master's hand returns the errant bird.

When morning's beams illumine all the earth,
And the bright eaglet plumes his radiant wings,
Then, like the angel who presides at birth,
“He who divideth light from darkness” brings
The spirits back from their late wanderings ;
But though He loose their bridles, He doth keep
The spirits tethered by mysterious strings
Each to its body.—Such a mystery deep
Lies in the thought of “Death and his twin brother, Sleep.”

Thus doth he keep them free from every harm ;
Like the “Companions of the Cave” they lie,
Or like the Ark of Noah, serene and calm,
While life's fierce tempests pass unheeded by.
Ah ! if no “seal were set upon thine eye,
And on thine ear,” thou mightest surely learn
That watchful Providence is ever nigh :
Did He not make their safety His concern,
Ne'er would the Seven Sleepers to the world return.

It is not good to be too wide-awake ;
Hear what poor Laila to the Prince replies :
“ Is it,” he asks in wonder, “ for thy sake
Majnún distracted to the desert flies ? ”
“ Ah ! ” said the maid, “ thou hast not Majnún’s eyes.”
Nor is it good to trust too much in dreams,
For phantoms oft before the sleeper rise ;
He clasps a form that like an angel seems,
And wakes to curse the fiends with which the dreamland
teems.

The bird is flying in the heaven above,
Its shadow fitteth on the earth beneath,
Like to the living substance doth it move ;
Yet none but fools would ever waste their breath
In hunting shadows, emptying out the sheath
That holds the precious arrows of their life,
Till they themselves shall fall a prey to death.
With such delusions is existence rife,
And he who hunts them findeth nought but bitter
strife.

But to return to him of whom I spoke.
Ere many days that craftily-souled Vizier
Had won the hearts of all that simple folk
By pious tricks and practices austere,

For his discourse was always good to hear ;
And though the few might chance perceive the cheat,
Yet to the many it did not appear ;
So, without testing it, the peasant eats
A spice of garlic in the daintiest dish of sweets.

Whate'er a man is will his converse be—
Can good proceed out of a bad man's head ?
Or living words be poured forth, warm and free,
From lips that long since have been cold and dead ?
By specious speeches is mankind misled ;
Although their wickedness may be unseen,
They work sure ruin. "Tis as 'Ali said,
"A dunghill may be covered o'er with green,
But no one who shall sit thereon may still be clean."

Twelve elders o'er the Christian counsels ruled—
Twelve elders, pious, reverend, and grey,
And these the Vizier had so well befooled,
That even his slightest hint they would obey.
Taking them severally aside one day,
He said, "I would that thou alone should'st teach
Here in my stead when I am taken away,
Take, then, my last instructions what to preach ;"
So saying he gave a sealèd paper unto each.

THE CONTENTS OF THE TWELVE PAPERS.

1. *Christians shall fast with all austerity.*
2. *Fasting availeth not; but charity.*
3. *Works are as nougat, but Faith is all in all.*
4. *Faith without works shall make a man to fall.*
5. *God biddeth every man to do His will,
But leaveth each one a free agent still.*
6. *Man hath no free-will of his own to use,
But only doth whatever God may choose.*
7. *Whoso extinguisheth the candle's light
Leaveth his soul in spiritual night.*
8. *He who puts out the earthly candle's ray
God's heavenly light shall be with him alway.*
9. *Young men and maids, if ye would fain do well,
In all things seek your elders' sage counsel.*
10. *To others' judgment ye shall not submit,
Or why hath God endowed a man with wit?*
11. *God is but one, although of Persons Three.*
12. *Three Gods in one! this thing can never be.*

How long will people thus misunderstand
And wilfully pervert God's high decrees,
Wresting the sense, and to each plain command
Giving just such construction as they please?

Christ could "make scarlet white as snow," but these
Would make a black out of the purest white.
Oh ! for the single eye that only sees
One hue, one atmosphere, serene and bright,
Bathing all earthly things in seas of heavenly light.

"The sea is His," and lo ! it giveth birth
To pearls, when taught by His all-bounteous rain.
"The earth is His also," and lo ! the earth,
Warmed by His rays, doth render up again
Seeds that have long within its bosom lain.
Ah ! that dull earth such gratitude should show,
While man's great blessings are bestowed in vain !
That things inanimate should feel the glow,
And man alone be cold of all things here below !

Who would not rather yield at once, and die,
Than struggle with Omnipotence—with Fate—
With One who in the twinkling of an eye
Createth worlds in myriads, as great
As this which doth your souls incarcerate ?
(Oh ! that the prisoner had the will to rove
Beyond the limits of his prison gate—
What joys ineffable might he not prove !)
Yet even against that One the foolish Vizier strove.

They weep full sore who strive yet strive in vain,
And they rejoice whom victory doth befriend ;
Yet is thy loss oft-times thy greatest gain,
And that whereon thou would'st thy blood expend
Brings thee but misery in the bitter end.
What is success but a vain paltry thing !
What are thy years, that thou would'st fain extend
Their weary length—or life, that thou should'st fling
Thy noblest hopes into its hopeless eddying !

Men have of old to grovelling beasts been turned ;
Yet, of all transmigrations, is there none
Worse than this life, for which thy soul hath yearned.
Thou, whose angelic flight had well-nigh won
The highest heaven—ere yet the task was done,
Ceased and swooped downward to this house of clay ;
Now thou art Adam's short-lived toiling son,
Whose soul was present on that primal day
When angels did to Adam their adoration pay !

Now when the Vizier's plot was thus prepared,
He shut himself within a lonely place,
Whither no one of his disciples dared
To follow him—nor would he show his face.
But as the days and hours rolled on apace,
And things without his guidance went not well,

His simple followers took heart of grace,
And clustered round the doorway of his cell,
And begged he would no more withhold his wise
counsel.

“We are as birds untaught to fly,” said they,
“Who needs must perish if we still abide
Within the nest. We wander from the way ;
Do thou, who errest not, become our guide.”
“If, as ye say, I err not,” he replied,
“Why do ye question or dispute my word ?”
“The fault,” they answered, “is not on our side ;
We are but pieces on the chequered board,
Nor have we power to move but what thy hands
afford.

“Thou art a lion couching for a spring,
And we, who imitate thee, can but show
A lion’s figure, such as Persia’s King
Bears on his standard, bounding to and fro
But as the standard waves or breezes blow.”
“Alas !” the Vizier cried, “in vain ye call ;
Yet enter in if it must needs be so,
For now I turn my face unto the wall.”

They came—to see his corpse upon the cavern fall.

Then o'er the body a dispute arose
Who should succeed him—words waxed fierce and
high
Amongst the elders, and each one of those
Who held the papers shouted, “ It is I ! ”
And brought his writing forth as warranty.
Thus, with a scroll and sword in either hand,
In bloody battle they the issue try,
Until by internecine war the band
Is broken up and perishes from out the land.

*THE JEWISH KING AND THE CHILD
WHO WAS THROWN INTO THE FIERY
FURNACE.*

Now when that Jewish King was dead,
(May curses rest upon his head),
Another monarch filled his place,
Who on the simple Christian race
Did wreak his spite and vengeance more
Than any who had gone before.

A man, whate'er the star may be
That reigns ascendant at his birth,
Moves ever in its company ;
He follows nought but joy and mirth
When gentler Venus rules his life ;
He seeks nought else but war and strife
If born when Mars controls the earth.
But there are planets brighter far
Than those which meet the mortal eye,

Surpassing each material star,
Revolving in a purer sky ;
Bright stars, that wax not pale nor dim,
That shine with God's own glorious light,
That dwell for evermore with Him,—
The fixed stars of the Infinite.
Before their pure and holy light
The powers of sin and darkness fly—
As when across the starless night,
To guard the portals of the sky,
Is hurled the meteoric brand.
Their mild but genial rays inspire
No martial and inhuman fire ;
But he upon whose soul they shine,
Though meek and lowly he appear,
Shall conquer in the power divine.
His light is ever bright and clear ;
God holds him safe from harm and fear
Within the hollow of His hand.
Their light is like a rich largess
God scattereth from the skies above,
And eager mortals forward press
To catch it in the lap of love.

Now when, despite the monarch's word,
The Christians prayed to Christ their Lord,



His anger waxed exceeding hot,
And he bethought him of a plot
Whereby the race might be destroyed.

A cunning artist was employed
To make an idol all in brass,
And set it up where folks should pass ;
And by that idol's side there stood
A furnace filled with blazing wood,
And all men who should come that way
Were bidden to kneel down and pray
Unto the image—and the man
("Twas thus the impious mandate ran)
Who should refuse to bend the knee
Unto the brazen deity,
Should, for the disobedience shown,
Be in that fiery furnace thrown.

The idol in the market stands,
Wrought deftly by the graver's hands,
And visible to every eye ;
Yet doth a truer idol lie
That monarch's cruel heart within,
And fashioned out of his great sin.
SELF is the name by which they call
That idol—type of idols all.

These are the sparks that blaze and die,
SELF is the flint from whence they fly.
The flames the force of water feel,
But what can quench the flint and steel ?

But if ye should desire to know
The various phases SELF can show
The records of this thing are writ
Upon the rolls of Tophet's pit.

A mother and her child one day,
A Christian, chanced to pass that way,
And saw the furnace blazing high,
And heard the people's hollow cry
Of cowardice and blasphemy.
All shuddering at the sound, she prest
Her little infant to her breast,
And on the rabble turned her back.
When lo ! that moment on her track
The minions of the monarch came,
And brought her to that raging flame,
And threw her at the idol's feet.

Now, for that life is very sweet,
And woman's heart is prone to fears,
She did begin with many tears
To worship as the tyrant bade;

When that young infant, that had laid
Until that moment in her arms,
Unconscious of her wild alarms,
A baby without speech and weak,
Was gifted with the power to speak,
And raised a warning voice aloud,
And prophesied before the crowd,
And uttered in his Maker's name
A protest on this sin and shame.

Now they who wrought the King's decree
Much marvelled at the prodigy,
That by a babe and suckling's tongue
God's praises should be plainly sung.
But one spake out, a soldier stern,
“I faith, we have a deal to learn ;
And children, as they now are born,
Are taught to hold those things in scorn
To which their fathers used to cling.
At least this puny, puling thing
Shall never flout our idols more.”
Therewith the little child he bore
And flung it in the mimic hell.

But now a wondrous thing befell ;
The child, unharmed and undismayed,

Stood up within the flames that played
Around his head in lambent whirls,
And twined and twisted with his curls ;
Then from the midst of fire and smoke
He lifted up his voice and spoke
In accents void of pain or fear :—
“ Mourn not for me, my mother dear !
Mourn not for me—for now I know
The flames that erst I dreaded so .
Were but the veil that did conceal
The thousand joys which now I feel.
Come and with me these pleasures share.
See how God’s chosen people fare !
Thy world, which seems to thy desire
Like coolest water, is but fire ;
While this, which doth like burning seem,
Is cooler than the coolest stream.
Come then and bathe therein with me.
Here shalt thou learn the mystery
Of Ibráhim, whom Nimrod threw
Into a fiery furnace too ;
And that which late so fiercely burned
Into a bed of roses turned.
Yest’re’en, before thou gavest me birth,
I feared to venture on the earth ;
But, fallen from thy maternal womb,

Methought it was a living tomb
Which I had left behind me then ;
And now the earth of mortal men
Appeareth like a dungeon pit,
Such joy have I at leaving it :
A second mother's womb was this,
And I am born again to bliss.
Here is the world can never fade,
Thy world is but a fleeting shade.
Come hither then, my mother dear !

“ Nay, never deem I *need thee* here,
Or that thy presence I entreat
To make my happiness complete.
I would but share the joys I prove
With those I reverence and love.
Come then and see this marvel strange,
How fiercest natures God can change,
When Bahman, grizzly winter's king,
Thus ushers in the mildest spring.”

He ceased, and for a moment's space
No sound was heard in all that place,
Save as the faggots leapt and split
And crackled in that burning pit,

Such silence fell upon the crowd ;
Then, with an outcry long and loud,
As cattle on a river's brink
Press forward eagerly to drink,
They threw themselves into the blaze.

Thereon the King, in dire amaze,
Did bid his men-at-arms advance
And drive them back with sword and lance,
And round the furnace make a stand,
Lest all the people in the land
Should in a single day be burned.

Then to the fire himself he turned :
“ O fire ! what have I done to thee
That thou should’st be mine enemy ?
Shall Christians, who deny thy name,
Feel not the vengeance of thy flame ?
And I, who worship at thy shrine,
Shall injury and loss be mine ?
Hath witchery been o’er thee cast,
Or is thy power of burning past ? ”
“ Nay,” said the fire, “ I have it still,
And ye shall test it an ye will ;

Nor yet does any change at all
Upon my ardent nature fall.
I am Elohim's fiery brand,
And lo ! I cleave at his command !
The dog, that in the tent doth rest,
Will fawn upon his master's guest ;
But if a stranger cometh there,
His limbs the trusty hound will tear.
And shall the elements be found
Less faithful than a Tartar's hound ?
Or God demand less honest work
Than any Bedawi or Turk ? ”

The elements their God obey ;
Not lifeless and inert are they,
But living servants of His will,
Prepared to comfort or to kill
As He commandeth. For our use
The flint and steel a fire produce,
But God it is that gives the light.
Our reasoning, how weak and vain !
A bucket hangs upon a chain
Which by a turning wheel we move ;
Does such a rude contrivance prove
That 'tis the wheel of chance which draws
The endless chain of Nature's laws.

Has not the wondrous tale been told,
How, in the evil days of old,
The prophet was to Yemen sent
To bid the men of 'Ad repent ?
And how he drew his staff around,
And traced a circle on the ground ;
And when the blast of wrath arose,
It injured not a hair of those
Who stood within that charmed ring ?
Because the wind had owned its King,
And bowed before His messenger.
When God has ta'en us in His care,
The cold and stormy wind of death
Is softer than a zephyr's breath.

Fire, water, earth, are ever thus
Subservient to the righteous :
Fire harmeth not the friend of God,
The sea obeyeth Moses' rod,
Earth swalloweth Corah at His nod.

Christ breathed upon the birds of clay,
And lo ! they lived and flew away.
Ye too may work this miracle ;
With lips of clay His praises tell,

And turn them with a pure heart's sighs,
To living birds of Paradise.

A mountain quivered at the sight
Of Moses' superhuman light,
And he—a lump of earth—a clod—
Could commune face to face with God.

Butathless, sirs, ye fain would see
The ending of this history,
'Twas thus : the Demon of the Fire
Rose up as one in sudden ire,
And swallowed up that tyrant King
With all his godless following.
They were but sons of fire, and went
Back to their native element ;
For matter, though it fleeteth fast,
Returneth to its source at last.
So water, howsoe'er confined,
Is borne in vapour on the wind,
Then falling, finds within the earth
The spring from which it had its birth.

We too, degenerate though we be,
Are portions of the Deity,

And Faith is a magnetic power,
That doth attract us every hour,
And draws us up to God again—
See that it draw us not in vain !

SONGS FROM HAFIZ.

—o—

MUSIC AND WINE.

BUT yestere'en upon mine ear
There fell a pleasing gentle strain,
With melody so soft and clear
That straightway sprung the glistening tear,
To tell my rapturous inward pain.

For such a deep harmonious flood
Came gushing as he swept each string,
It melted all my harsher mood,
Nor could my glance, as rapt I stood,
Fall pitiless on anything.

To make my growing weakness weak,
The Sáki crossed my dazzled sight,
Upon whose bright and glowing cheek,
And perfumed tresses, dark and sleek,
Was blended strangely day with night.

“Fair maid !” I murmured as she passed,
“The goblet which thy bounty fills
Such magic spell hath on me cast,
Methinks my soul is free at last
From human life and human ills.”

LOVE AND AGE.

My heart with youthful ardour glows,
Though all my locks are frosted o'er,
And white with winter's tell-tale snows.
Ah ! now the cruel maiden knows
What secret love my bosom bore.

Now through the portals of mine eyes
My prisoned soul hath taken flight ;
Now, like a bird set free, it flies
To revel in the loved one's sight.
Ah me ! where it must soon alight,
Love's fatal net beneath it lies.

FALSEHOOD.

WHO looks on beauty's treacherous hue,
Allured by winsome smiles,
And deems it true as well as fair,
His simple faith ere long must rue.
But ah ! what fowler's net beguiles
A bird when nought but chaff is there ?

FRESHLY FRESH AND NEWLY NEW.

(TÁZA BATÁZA NAU BANAU.)

O MINSTREL ! sing thy lay divine,
Freshly fresh and newly new !
Bring me the heart-expanding wine,
Freshly fresh and newly new !

Seated beside a maiden fair,
I gaze with a loving and raptured view,
And I sip her lip and caress her hair,
Freshly fresh and newly new !

Who of the fruit of life can share,
Yet scorn to drink of the grape's sweet dew ?
Then drain a cup to thy mistress fair,
Freshly fresh and newly new !

She who has stolen my heart away
Heightens her beauty's rosy hue,
Decketh herself in rich array,
Freshly fresh and newly new !

Balmy breath of the western gale,
Waft to her ears my love-song true ;
Tell her poor love-lorn Háfiz' tale,
Freshly fresh and newly new !

THE LESSON OF THE FLOWERS.

"TWAS morning, and the Lord of day
Had shed his light o'er Shiraz' towers,
Where bulbuls trill their love-lorn lay
To serenade the maiden flowers.

Like them, oppressed by love's sweet pain,
I wander in a garden fair ;
And there, to cool my throbbing brain,
I woo the perfumed morning air.

The damask rose with beauty gleams,
Its face all bathed in ruddy light,
And shines like some bright star that beams
From out the sombre veil of night.

The very bulbul, as the glow
Of pride and passion warms its breast,
Forgets awhile its former woe
In pride that conquers love's unrest.

The sweet narcissus opes its eye,
A teardrop glistening on the lash,
As though 'twere gazing piteously
Upon the tulip's bleeding gash.

The lily seemed to menace me,
And showed its curved and quivering blade,
While every frail anemone
A gossip's open mouth displayed.

And here and there a graceful group
Of flowers, like men who worship wine,
Each raising up his little stoup
To catch the dewdrop's draught divine.

And others yet like Hebes stand,
Their dripping vases downward turned,
As if dispensing to the band
The wine for which their hearts had burned.

This moral it is mine to sing:
Go learn a lesson of the flowers ;
Joy's season is in life's young spring,
Then seize, like them, the fleeting hours.

MEDITATIONS.

O CUP-BEARER ! fill up the goblet, and hand it around
to us all ;
For to love that seemed easy at first, these unforeseen
troubles befall.

In the hope that the breeze of the south will blow
yon dark tresses apart,
And diffuse their sweet perfume around, oh ! what
anguish is caused to the heart.

Ay ! sully your prayer-mat with wine, if the elder
encourage such sin ;
For the traveller surely should know all the manners
and ways of the inn.

What rest or what comfort for me can there be in the
loved one's abode,
When the bell is incessantly tolling to bid us each pack
up his load ?

The darkness of night and the fear of the waves and the
waters that roar ;—
How should they be aware of our state who are roaming
in safety ashore ?

I yielded me up to delight, and it brought me ill fame at
the last :
Shall a secret be hidden which into a general topic has
passed ?

Would'st thou dwell in His presence ? then never thyself
unto absence betake ;
Till thou meetest the one whom thou lovest, the world
and its pleasures forsake.

THE TEARS OF KHORASSAN.

(FROM THE PERSIAN OF ANVARI.)

O GENTLE Zephyr ! if o'er Samarcand
Some dewy morning thou should'st chance to blow,
Then waft this letter to our monarch's hand,
Wherein Khorassan tells her tale of woe.
Wherein the words that for the heading stand
Are present danger and destruction nigh ;
Wherein the words that are inscribed below
Are grief, and wretchedness, and misery ;
On every fold a martyr's blood appears,
From every letter breaths a mourner's sigh ;
Its lines are blotted with the orphan's tears,
Its ink the widow's burning anguish dries !
Its bare recital wounds the listener's ears,
Its bare perusal scathes the reader's eyes.
What ! is Khorassan's most unhappy case
Unknown to him in whose domain she lies ?
No, for his knowledge doth all things embrace,
. Whate'er of good or evil is displayed,

In earth's wide limits or in boundless space.
For such things doubtless was provision made ;
And now at length to Trán's succour—now
His conquering armies shall the land invade.
Thou, just as Khosrau, mighty monarch, thou
In whom the blood of seventy kings doth run !
Thy lineage and the diadem on thy brow,
These are proud boasts, but surely thou hast none
So proud as this—that to the kings of earth
Great Sultan Sanjar owned thee for his son !
Avenge, as should a son of noble birth,
Thy father's wrongs upon this Tartar horde !
If of thy wardship Túrán knows no dearth,
Shall Trán be uncared for by her lord ?
Kaiyumers, king of good renown and just,
Great Kusra, swift to punish or reward,
Manticehr, in his presence so august,
Afrídún, in his majesty and might—
Compared with thee, these were but vilest dust.
Oh ! hear the story which I now recite,
And when thou hearest it compassionate,
And let thy slaves find favour in thy sight.
Oppressed and humbled by opposing fate,
To thee, her hope, her glory, and her joy,
Khorassan pleads in her forlorn estate.
No soul, thou knowest well, may there enjoy

A moment's safety from the Tartar troupe ;
All trace of good from 'Irán they destroy,
Good men to bad men are compelled to stoop,
The noble are subjected to the vile,
The priest is pressed to fill the drunkard's stoup.
No man therein is ever seen to smile,
Save at the blow that brings release—and doom !
No maiden lives that they do not defile,
Except the maid within her mother's womb !
In every town the mosque and house of prayer—
To give their horses and their cattle room—
Is left all roofless, desolate, and bare.
"Prayer for our Tartar rulers" there is none
In all Khorassan, it is true—for where,
Where are the preachers and the pulpits gone ?
There mothers, when by the assassin's steel
They see their children murdered one by one,
Dare not give utterance to the grief they feel.
The freeman, kidnapped by the Tartar chief,
And sold again, rejoices in the deal ;
For change—a change of *masters*, brings relief.
Their law-courts give such fair—God save us!—play
When Muslims litigate with unbelief,
Not one in fifty ever gains the day.
In Room and Khata, in the very lands
Where Káfirs hold an undisputed sway,

The Muslim on an equal footing stands ;
For Muslim countries is the right reserved
To wrest the right from out the Muslim's hands !
Oh ! thou who never from the right hast swerved,
Release thy country from this load of shame ;
For God's sake—God, whom thy forefathers served,
Who on our coinage hath inscribed thy name,
Who on thy brow hath placed the regal crown,
And given thee all things, power and wealth and
fame !—
For God's sake, who on tyranny doth frown,
For God's sake, hear a sorrowing land's request,
And put these plundering Tartar ruffians down !
Now is the time to set thy lance in rest,
Now is the time to draw the avenging blade.
Last year their strongholds did thine arms invest,
Thou didst bear off, in one successful raid,
Wives, wealth, and children—make a fresh attack,
And of their very lives shall spoil be made !
Fair Trán rivalled Paradise—Alack !
Though humbled sorely, she will make a stand
Against the oppressors, and will drive them back,
If thou but bid her. Thou didst make the land
Like Eden's bowers, while those who on her prey
Have made her worse than hell's hot sulphurous
strand.

If one possesseth in Khorassan, say
An ass or mule, he keepeth them by stealth,
Or sells the treasure at what price he may ;
What, pray, shall he do who hath no such wealth ?
Oh ! pity those who every day and hour
In fruitless wailing waste their time and health !
Oh ! pity those who, craving coarsest flour,
Whilome despised the daintiest of sweets !
Oh ! pity those who, though in dust they cower,
Whilome in honour held the loftiest seats !
Oh ! pity those who lie on felt, in place
Of sleeping softly in their silken sheets !
Like Alexander, wander o'er the face
Of earth, and conquer over land and sea,
For Alexander, by the heavenly grace,
Hath no successor on the earth but thee.
Thine is the purpose—may success be thine !
Thine is the conflict—victory must be
Of Him who did the universe design !
Such earthly sovereignty, such power and might,
Are given to thee by warranty divine.
When thou dost deck thee in thy armour bright,
Thy foeman decks him in his funeral pall ;
Thy foeman calls for quarter and respite,
When thou dost for thy pluméd helmet call.
'Irán should of thy justice have a share ;

Look not upon her in her hour of fall
As though there were not such a country there !
Thou art the sun—Khorassan ruined lies ;
The sun is ne'er in his regards unfair,
Alike o'er town and ruin doth he rise.
Thou art the rain-cloud—Irán is a field
Where every green thing withers up and dies ;
Doth not the rain-cloud then its treasures yield
Both on the desert and the flowery mead ?
Thou art a King—a King should be a shield
To strong and weak in every hour of need.
'Irán and Túráن both on thee depend,
Shall Túráن thrive and 'Irán ne'er be freed ?
Never, until thou shalt her cause defend
And urge thy charger in the battle's storm,
Shall crushed Khorassan once more rise and send
Back to their native wilds this Tartar swarm.
When shall thy shout of victory reach the skies ?
When shall Khorassan's rallying legions form ?
Thou hast a minister in counsels wise,
Learned in the mysteries of the law, and one
Who over Islám like a sun doth rise,
Who from thy light hath all his greatness won,
As souls from knowledge ;—who for thy fair face
Longs as the moon longs for the glorious sun.
When all our wrongs, our misery and disgrace,

Are written, he, on direst vengeance bent,
Will couch his spear and gird him for the race.
May Heaven aid him in his good intent,
That by his counsels he may give thee aid !
His office is as of a prophet sent
By God to mediate for the things He made.
Oh ! free thy nation from this gathering pest,
And on the day when men's accounts are
paid,
That act of thine shall rank thee with the blest.
Great Sultan Sanjar, who thy childhood trained,
(Oh, thou of kingly qualities possessed !)
So long as o'er Trárian lands he reigned
Kemál-ud-dín was ever at his side,
And still the credit of his name maintained.
Thou saw'st how then his probity was tried ;
Canst thou not now implicitly rely
On whom a monarch like thy sire relied ?
Nothing escaped his penetrating eye
In Persia, whether it were good or bad,
E'en as the sun that, shining in the sky,
Makes with his rays the whole creation glad,
Such genial influence over Persia's fate
His guiding care and ruling wisdom had.
He, in the field, in business of the state,
Right faithful service to thy house hath shown ;

And now have we implored him to relate
Khorassan's wrongs before the imperial throne ;
Perchance the tale may make a tear-drop start,
When all our wrongs and miseries are known.
Thou who hast played a faithful sovereign's part,
Give credence to a faithful Vizier's word ;
He has the story, like his prayers, by heart.
He is our shield, be thou the avenging sword ;
He speaks but for the welfare of the land,
And not to earn advancement or reward.
In many an art thou hast a master's hand,
But most of all in poesy divine ;
If then, mayhap, I should convicted stand
Of repetition in this verse of mine,
Judge not too harshly of my feeble lay,
'Twas direst need that did the rhymes entwine.
'Am'ak, the greatest poet of his day,
This thought appropriate to my theme expressed :
"O Zephyr ! waft this blood-stained dust away
To Ispahan ;" and should our sad request
Be in such manner to the king conveyed,
Khorassan's wrongs may e'en be yet redressed.
Not till the sun hath his last journey made
Around the sky and rested him for aye ;
Not until then be thy dominion stayed ;—
And thy petitioners shall ever pray.

PALINODIA.

(FROM THE PERSIAN OF ANVARI.)



AH ! the spheres are incessantly rolling,
And the Archer is shifting his ground,
And the moon is for ever patrolling,
And Jupiter going his round.
The water that tastes to another
Refreshing and cool on the lip,
Is as fire that no efforts can smother
In the cup which I sip.

The dust that all quiet is lying
When others recline on the ground,
Around me in volumes is flying
Like a desert where whirlwinds abound ;
And Fate, in the ship of my being,
In happiness hurries me past,
But if ever from sorrow I'm fleeing,
It anchors me fast.

If I smile in society gaily
But once in a lifetime, it sneers ;
If I weep, which, alas ! I do daily,
It bids me shed blood for my tears.
I mind, when caparisoned knightly,
A helmet and vizor I bore ;
But a dishclout, befouled and unsightly,
I yesterday wore.

O Fate ! you should learn to be stable
From the mythical 'Anka's career,
Not to shift like the crow in the fable,
Which changes its sex every year.
Ah ! to hope in this world full of muddle,
How false and fallacious it seems !
'Tis like hoping to find in a puddle
Elysian streams.

Dame Fortune has laid up a treasure
Of sorrows unnumbered in store,—
I know it, because I've the pleasure
Of keeping a key to the door.
Day dies and gives birth to the morrow,
And as long as the universe rolls,
Its axes are anguish and sorrow,
And treason its poles.

If it turns round old Tellus, and shows you
The frigid or temperate zone,
It never pretends that it knows you,
Or cares to know which is your own.
I've suffered each kick and each buffet
Of Fortune for many a year ;
And as if I'd not suffered enough, it
Now stabs with its spear.

To the words which I uttered in jesting,
A spiteful construction they give ;
And they call me an ingrate, protesting
I libel the land where I live.
What ! I commit such profanation !
I libel religion and you !
I'd not believe such defamation
Of a Khaibari Jew !

Why, where would you find such another
To nurse it, if Heaven were young,
As Balkh ? (It would have for its mother
The land whence the Chosen One sprung.)
The land of the Prophet's descendants
Is Balkh and in serving it, I,
Like one of the Prophet's dependents,
Would willingly die.

And first in that eminent cluster
Is he whose impressive decrees
Could guide the wild winds as they bluster,
And keep them from harming the trees.
If a mortal affected with blindness
From birth were in front of him now,
He would see the great soul and the kindness
That beam from his brow.

Did he an asylum accord it,
The timidest creature that flies,
Like an emperor proudly might lord it
O'er the eagle that soars in the skies
In his lineage doth prophecy linger,
To his household doth royalty cling,
There remains but to place on his finger
King Solomon's ring.

My lord the Chief Justice, the famous,
The pride of the Abbaside throne,
Who at once into silence can shame us
By the force of his language alone.
'Tis like Sámarf's natural magic,
It can force us to weep and to laugh,
While we poets, both comic and tragic,
Are dumb as the calf.

And water and fire, if you mixed them,
And found that they would not agree,
To settle the matter betwixt them
He'd quickly pronounce a decree !
If you wish to make mention concisely
Of all to which men should aspire,
Hamíd-ad-dín's name would precisely
Give all you require.

In his time men had ceased to be cruel
To Virtue, which puzzled her sore,
Till she found herself held as a jewel,
And one which he constantly wore.
There's Safiy-ud-dín, whose jurisdiction
So strengthens authority's arm,
That the devil, for fear of conviction,
Is powerless to harm.

He's Muftí of east, and he's Canon
Of west, and should heaven aspire
As a pulpit to put such a man on,
You must raise it a step or two higher.
To his legal decisions we listen
With pleasure and wonder, but when
He writes them, our very eyes glisten
Like ink in his pen.

Abashed at the brilliant prælection,
And wisdom that falls from his lips,
The sun takes the moon for protection,
Resorting to total eclipse.

The world takes its happiest omen
Each day from his fortunate star ;
From such omens I fancy that no man
Himself would debar.

And Táj-ud-dín's delicate sallies,
Cut always in opposite ways,
Like that two-edged weapon of 'Ali's,
So famous in chivalrous days.

In the garden of clerical learning,
Like a nightingale sweetly he'll sing ;
And daybreak to hear him is yearning,
Like a rose in the spring.

His sermons are free from all dulness—
And, did they form part of his flock,
The Moon would repent of her fulness,
And Venus feel modesty's shock.

I know not by what appellation,
I ought of his language to treat,
It's neither divine inspiration,
Nor sorcery's cheat !

When out of his bottled-up speeches,
 His eloquence draweth the stop,
The ear, like a tankard, upreaches,
 And trembles at losing a drop.
Since the proofs of the Scriptural story
 Which Dr. Nizám-ud-dín gave,
The very archangel would glory
 To act as his slave.

The arguments used in his treatise
 Have never so much as a flaw,
Each page in itself so complete is,
 'Twould teach you the whole of the law.
If you wanted the heavens and missed 'em,
 In vain for the *tracts* might you look,
Unless he had got the whole system
 Bound up in a book.

Such as he are the “heirs of the prophets,”
 In knowledge and piety dressed,
Yet he knows that but little it profits,
 If modesty crown not the rest.
If I cannot do justice to him, its
 A fault, but a venial one,
For poetry, you see, has its limits,
 His merits have none.

This hack of a muse in my stable,
Can never his Pegasus catch,
Was there ever a caravan able,
The march of an army to match ?
Of such is the grand corporation,
That dwells in this city of mine,
Where each as a bright constellation
In Heaven would shine.

Yet for libelling Balkh they abuse me
(O Lord ! that such lies should be told !)
Why they might when about it accuse me,
Of finding a canker on gold.
By Heaven ! I think it would task all
The tricks at which fate is so pat,
To prove me to be such a rascal,
To fix me with that !

The proof of a Solomon's reckoned,
To lie in the ring of his Song ;
The talent to forge such a second,
Can scarce to a devil belong.
Be logical in your deductions,
Don't palm off such fustian as mine !
Don't you know one of 'Azar's productions,
From creatures divine ?

My life is for ever embittered,
By being accused of such trash ;
And you—all your lifetime is frittered,
In stirring this trumpery hash !
He was bursting with envy, and from it
This impudent calumny forged :—
Well, a weak but full stomach must vomit,
When overmuch gorged.

They've made a great bull of it somewhere ;
The libel on him has been tacked,
And said bull, bent on mischief, has come where
My corn was all quietly stacked.
I'm not, indeed, simply denying,
That my tongue ever spoke such a word,—
And that I should call worse than lying,
And twice as absurd.

But I swear that the thought never came in,
My head since the day I was born—
Ah ! the wolf must come in for defaming,
When Joseph is said to be torn—
As I hope for God's help and assistance,—
And the soul He puts out of the pale,
In the market of human existence,
Must evermore *fail* ;—

God, who by His wisdom can view in
The future the secrets of fate,
Who spreads out the meshes of ruin,
And lures with prosperity's bait ;
Whose influence can if He pleases,
Besprinkle the stars o'er the sky,
As the rose petals stirred by the breezes,
Are scattered and fly.

The dragon-toothed thorn in the garden,
A sting like a scorpion's shows ;
He hath posted it there as a warden,
To watch o'er the delicate rose.
Till over the neck of the Heaven,
The ringlets of evening flow,
Night veils not with locks like the raven,
Day's maidenly glow.

Then lo ! from the hemisphere darkling,
Night's tresses He deftly doth part,
And, from Heaven's arched eyebrows outsparkling,
Eyes bright as narcissuses dart.
The sun sinketh down in the ocean,
And azure-hued vapours arise,
'Tis the incense of Nature's devotion,
Perfuming the skies.



Ere atoms were yet in existence,
His “be and it was so” had birth ;
He needed not matter’s assistance,
In forming this beautiful earth.
Yet its shape is symmetrical rigour,
Its hues are most pleasing and bright ;
For a sphere is perfection in figure,
In colouring, light.

To the fishes bright armour He giveth,
Unto chanticleer giveth a crest—
His praise by no mortal that liveth
Can ever be duly expressed,
Till the dumb man shall make an oration,
Till the stocks and the stones shall find voice,
Till the whole of the silent creation
In language rejoice.

All nations and languages know Him,
Even infancy lisbeth His name,
Allah, Tangari, Yezdán, Elohim—
”Tis the earliest sound we can frame.
All space and all limits excelling,
To the roof of the Universe soar,
Then you may see a tile of His dwelling—
One tile and no more.

A worm sucks the juices that issue
From a handful of mulberry leaves,
And He makes it to rival the tissue
Which Susa's best factory weaves.
The honey, delicious in flavour,
He teacheth the bee to secrete ;
And joineth, with infinite favour,
The sting and the sweet.

When Nature, His page, is entrusted
The cane's hollow goblet to brim,
With crystals the cup is encrusted
Or syrup runs over the rim.
When over the whole of creation
Man's reason He caused to preside,
He ordered the drunkard's potation
To humble its pride.

His anger with meteors smiteth
The demons who dare to aspire ;
His grace made the beast that delighteth
To dwell in the midst of the fire.
His mandates are fixed and eternal :
One breach has laid Lucifer low
On the threshold of torment infernal
In infinite woe.

“Thus Adam rebelled,” was a sentence
Had settled our doom at the Fall,
Till the words, “He approved his repentance,”
Gave hope of atonement for all.
Ere Noah had his “leave them not” spoken,
Denouncing the whole of his race,
The flood-gates of Heaven were broken
And deluged earth’s face.

When His love for his friend He discloses,
And His storehouse of mercy lays bare,
He turneth the fire into roses,
And embers forget what they were.
A shepherd of lowly condition
The mount of His Holiness trod,
And confounded the skilful magician
With only a rod.

The markings of motherhood’s honour
He drew upon Miriam’s face,
Conferring His Spirit upon her,
Nor robbed her of maidenhood’s grace.
The shoulder of Ahmed His chosen,
The stamp of a prophet revealed,
And the fountain prophetic was frozen
And evermore sealed.

He beckons the moon, and dissolving
 Apart into crescents it flies ;
Twain curls in a mirror revolving
 High up in the roof of the skies.
Of the powers which His prophet was claiming
 They needed an evident sign,
And behold the sleek reptile proclaiming
 His office divine.

On the steed of your fancy's ideal
 On, on for Eternity, ride
Through the regions of space empyreal !
 O'er His threshold you never will stride.
By Him,—and 'tis veriest treason,
 The deadliest treason of all,
Alike to religion and reason,
 On others to call—

By Him do I swear!—If I'm trying
 Some means of evading the oath,
Or should any accuse me of lying
 We're infidels, either or both.
Were I not far above all suspicion,
 How to perjure myself should I dare,
When 'twould doom me to lasting perdition
 Such oaths to forswear ?

Come let us sit down for a minute ;
Your mind is a crumpled-up page,
But I'll smooth every wrinkle that's in it

When once we in converse engage.
Now here's what I'm fancied to sin in—
I'm living at ease in the town,
I'm clad in the finest of linen,
I'm resting on cushions of down ;

By great and by small I am treated
As though I were lord of the town ;
Hurrah ! for a throne where I'm seated
Without all the weight of a crown.
I was once in obscurity pining,
An atom on Kháwari ground ;
Now the sun of my presence outshining
Sheds lustre around.

And favours like these I'm returning
With scurrilous verses like those !
Then water has taken to burning
And fire in an aqueduct flows !
Now do, my good sir, for a season
Be rational, pray, if you can ;
For there is such a matter as *reason*
Pertaining to man.

Do you think I'd fall foul of a country
Where, before he could enter the door,
The devil must drop his effront'ry,
And never rebel any more.
And *that* when I know you will take up
The very least slip of my pen,
And are lying in ambush to rake up
Old grudges again.

There's no one in any society
Would do it, unless he were mad,
And had lost every sense of propriety
And every good point which he had.
To play in his hands and rely on
An enemy's honour,—to me
Is like matching the field-mouse and lion,
In hopes they'll agree.

Be just though your enemy cozen,
And he'll very soon look like a fool ;
Like the compass he'll turn by the dozen,
Do you be as straight as the rule.
I've sifted the matter and know it,
That to mind one's own business is hard,
If they can't find a spot on the poet,
They will on the pard.

There's a tale of a daw and an eagle—
But I needn't allude to the verse,
For a duck may dress up like a sea-gull
And no one be twopence the worse.
Because I'm admired as a singer,
With envy you're ready to die.
Are you to put *your* dirty finger
In every one's pie ?

Get out ! for though Gog, *redivivus*
As Calumny, batter and storm,
He won't of our rampart deprive us,
If Sikander's alive and in form.
Now in case you are tempted too greatly
To tread on such delicate ground,
I'll tell you a story that's lately
Been going the round.

A fop that I won't waste a curse on,
To make me look stupid and small,
Says, “ Who is that strange-looking person ?
I can't recollect him at all.”
Says Balkh, “ Well he is as you've reckoned,
But I can the matter arrange,
As *I'm* a new world every second
No wonder *he's* strange.”

As for Balkh I devotedly serve it—
I'm as dust under foot in a town,
Where I and all such as deserve it
Gain honour and wealth and renown.
Than the present my rhymes could have been at
No brighter or luckier date,
With a Násir and Togral Takin at
The head of the state.

*FROM THE PERSIAN OF OMAR EL
KHEIYĀM.*

—o—

KAABAH or Joss-house—'tis His house of prayer,
E'en jangling bells invite us to His shrine :
Mosque or cathedral—He is present there
Crescent or crucifix—'tis Allah's sign.

AN EPIGRAM.

(BY THE SON OF THE PERSIAN POET 'AM'AK.)

LAST night methought, before my waking eyes,
I saw our great forefather Adam stand,
With Eve beside him ; while in loving guise
Each looked on each, hand clasped in mutual hand.
“ Adam,” I murmured, “ noble as thou art,
Súzeni is descended from thy line ! ”
“ Ah ! is it so ? ” said Adam, with a start,
“ Then Eve henceforward is no wife of mine ! ”

THE SÍMURGH.

—o—

IN the realms of non-existence should thy footsteps
chance to fall,
Bear this message, oh ! my spirit, to the Símурgh's
silent hall :
“ Never leave yon happy quiet for a world of sin
and strife,
But beware thee, Calm Immortal, of the weary paths
of life.”

FROM THE ARABIC.

—o—

OUR signals in love are the glances that dart
From eyes that with love's own intelligence fill ;
Our eyebrows interpret the thoughts of the heart,
And Love's voice is heard though our own may be
still.

GUL U BULBUL;
OR, THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE ROSE.

(FROM THE PERSIAN OF HUSSEIN VA'IZ KÁSHIFI.)

—o—

WHERE murmuring Rukna rolls his silvery stream,
Beneath the azure of a cloudless sky ;
Where gilded spires that in the sunlight gleam
'Midst tow'ring palm-trees charm the lingering eye ;
Where every zephyr on its balmy wings
To blushing roses wafts the Bulbul's sigh ;

Where Nature's choir in notes harmonious sings,
Making sweet music to the rustling grove ;
And not a sight and not a sound but brings
Its meed of beauty, melody, and love ;
There bloomed a garden such as they behold
Who dwell by Silsabil's blest streams above.

Not lovelier Iram, which, as bards have told,
In far Arabia's scorching desert lies,
Where false Sheddád's Imárets glare with gold,

Though mystery shrouds them now from mortal eyes,
Save when upon some lone lost wanderer's sight,
Its diamond turrets like a day-dream rise.

Here, in a corner shrinking from the light,
A rosebud blossomed, whose enchanting hue
Rivalled the cheeks of her, whose beauty bright

O'er earth's great conqueror such enchantment threw.
Each morn when rising from his ocean bed,
Bright Phœbus, beaming, burst upon the view,

And o'er the awakening world his radiance shed,
The garden's guardian left his humble room,
And paced the parterres by the path that led

To that calm nook which saw the floweret bloom.
As some fond lover to an arbour creeps,
Where lulled to rest by eve's encircling gloom,

The maid he loves in guileless beauty sleeps,
And lingering looks till at his soft sigh's sound
Her startled eye from out its curtain peeps;

So gazed the gardener as the days wore round,
And watched the bud its opening charms disclose,
And breathed the perfume it diffused around.

But lo ! one luckless morn, beside the rose
A mournful nightingale with grief o'erpressed,
In wistful warblings wailed his wearying woes,

And sought in song to soothe his saddened breast ;
And in the wantonness of wild despair,
Still plucked the leaflets from their fragrant nest,

Till all the tree was desolate and bare ;
The rose was ruined, but the thorn remained
Stern sentry still though no fair charge was there.

With bitter sighs the gardener complained,
And cursed the culprit in his maddening rage,
His passion's steed no gentle patience reined,

And nought but vengeance could his wrath assuage :
With treacherous traps the hapless bird he lured,
And kept him captive in a cruel cage,

Mocking the pangs his prisoner endured.
To whom the nightingale thus made his moan :
“ Oh wherefore now, within these bars immured,

Am I thus left to mourn and die alone ?
Dost thou then fancy that my notes will ring
Here in this prison with a sweeter tone,

Than midst the branches where I sit and sing ?
Or is there nothing that can heal the smart
Of thy great loss, but my poor breast to wring,

From all I love thus dooming me to part ?
If one rose ruined costs so dear to me,
What shalt thou suffer for a broken heart ? ”

The plaintive prisoner by this piteous plea,
So mov'd his captor, that the self-same hour
He loosed his fetters, and dismissed him free

To flutter fearless 'midst each favourite flower.
Then sung the Bulbul from the tangled wood,
“ The great archangel on the ‘ night of power ’

Revealed that ‘ good must be repaid with good,’
So for thy kindness will I make return ;
Beneath the tree whereon at first I stood

There lies a treasure in a hidden urn.”
The gardener digging found the precious prize,
And thus responded, “ I would gladly learn

How thou divinedst what thus buried lies,
Yet dust spread lightly o'er a clumsy snare
Should be sufficient to deceive thine eyes ! ”

To whom the Bulbul, “thou should’st be aware
That when from heaven the high decrees descend,
’Tis vain to struggle, man his fate must bear,
For God shapes all things to some useful end.”

SHÁH MAHMÚD.

(FROM THE SHÁH-NÁMEH OF FIRDAUSI.)

OH, Sháh Mahmúd, though climes obey thy nod,
If man thou fearest not ; yet fear thy God !
Full many a king has lived before thy time,
Greater than thee in state—in all save crime.
These sought for nothing but a spotless fame ;
But love of lucre mars the mightiest name.
Though Heaven's high grace has set thee on the
throne,
Thou shalt not spurn my counsel's warning tone !
Dost thou not know me one of sternest mould ?
Dost thou not fear the bloody blade I hold ?
Thou on my faith hast dared to cast a slur,
Me—me a lion, thou would'st name a cur !
Men fain would prove me infidel or worse,
And say that heresy defiles my verse ;
And sure no viler caitiff e'er was born
Than he whose soul religion's truth would scorn.

They lie ! I serve my God and Prophet still ;
Ay, though a tyrant would my life-blood spill !
Ne'er shall my soul from duty's path be led,
Not were thy sword uplifted o'er my head !
So ! thou hast threatened me, that from my form
Thy beasts shall crush the streams of life-blood warm.
I fear thee not ; my heart is pure, and bright
With 'Alí's glory and the Prophet's light.
Thou say'st "the Prophet's warnings I obey ;"
Then this, I tell thee—this is what they say :
If thou hast wisdom, intellect, and mind,
Thy friends in 'Alí and the Prophet find.
Mine be the blame should harm from hence accrue,
I counsel that myself will aye pursue.

Had Mahmúd's father been what he is now,
A crown of gold had decked this aged brow.
Had Mahmúd's mother been of gentle blood,
In heaps of wealth full knee-deep had I stood.

RUSTAM AND AKWAN DEV.

(FROM THE SHÁH-NÁMEH.)



KAI KHOSRAU sat in a garden bright
With all the beauties of balmy spring ;
And many a warrior armour dight,
With a stout kamand and an arm of might,
Supported Persia's king.

With trembling mien and a pallid cheek,
A breathless hind to the presence ran,
And on bended knee in posture meek,
With faltering tongue that scarce could speak,
His story thus began :—

“ Alack a day ! for the news I bear
Will like to the follies of fancy sound,
Thy steeds were stabled and stalled with care,
When a wild ass sprang from its forest lair,
With a swift resistless bound ;

“A monster fell, of a dusky hue,
And eyes that flashed with a hellish glow,
Many it maimed and some it slew,
Then back to the forest again it flew,
As an arrow leaves the bow.”

Kai Khosrau’s rage was a sight to see ;
“Now curses light on the foul fiend’s head !
Full rich and rare shall his guerdon be !
Whose stalwart arm shall bring to me
The monster, live or dead.”

But the mail-clad warriors kept their ground,
And their bronzed cheeks were blanched with fear.
With scorn the Shah on the cowards frowned :
“One champion bold may yet be found
While Rustam wields a spear !”

No tarrying made the son of Zál,
Small reck had he of the fiercest fray,
But promptly came at the monarch’s call,
And swore that the monster fiend should fall,
Ere closed the coming day.

The swift Rakush's sides he spurred,
And speedily gained the darksome wood ;
Nor was the trial for long deferred,
But soon a hideous roar was heard,
Had chilled a baser blood.

Then darting out like a flashing flame,
Traverse his path the wild ass fled ;
And the hero then with unerring aim
Hurled his stout kamand, but as erst it came,
Unscathed the monster fled.

“Now Khudá in Heaven,” bold Rustam cried,
“Thy chosen champion deign to save !
Not all in vain shall my steel be tried,
Though he who my powers has thus defied,
But none but Akwan Dev.”

Then steadily chasing his fiendish foe,
He thrust with hanger, and smote with brand ;
But ever avoiding the deadly blow,
It vanished away like the scenes that show
On Balkh’s delusive sand.

For full three wearisome nights and days
Stoutly he battled with warlike skill ;
But the demon such magical shifts assays,
That leaving his courser at large to graze,
He rests him on a hill.

But scarce can slumber his eyelids close,
Ere Akwan Dev from afar espies ;
And never disturbing his foe's repose,
The earth from under the mound he throws,
And off with the summit flies.

“Now, daring mortal,” the demon cried,
“Whither wouldst have me carry thee ?
Shall I cast thee forth on the mountain side,
Where the lions roar and the reptiles glide,
Or hurl thee into the sea ?”

“Oh, bear me off to the mountain side,
Where the lions roar and the serpents creep ;
For I fear not the creatures that spring or glide,
But where is the arm that can stem the tide,
Or still the raging deep ?”

Loud laughed the fiend as his load he threw,
Far plunging into the roaring flood ;
And louder laughed Rustam as out he flew,
For he fain had chosen the sea, but knew
The fiend's malignant mood.

Soon all the monsters that float or swim,
With ravening jaws down on him bore ;
But he hewed and he hacked them limb from limb,
And the wave pellucid grew thick and dim
With streaks of crimson gore.

With thankful bosom he gains the strand,
And seeketh his courser near and far,
Till he hears him neigh and he sees him stand
Among the herds of a Tartar band,
The steeds of Isfendiyár.

But Rustam's name was a sound of dread,
And the Tartar heart it had caused to quake ;
The herd was there, but the hinds had fled,
So all the horses he captive led
For good Kai Khosrau's sake.

Then loud again through the forest rings
The fiendish laugh and the taunting cry ;
But his kamand quickly the hero flings,
And around the demon it coils and clings,
As a cobweb wraps a fly.

Kai Khosrau sat in his garden fair,
Mourning his champion lost and dead,
When a shout of victory rent the air,
And Rustam placed before his chair
A demon giant's head !

AN ANCIENT ARABIC PRIZE POEM.

No people have cultivated the art of poetry so extensively or so enthusiastically as the Arabs. With them it was not merely a passion, it was a necessity, for as their own proverb has it : "The records of the Arabs are the verses of their bards." What the ballad was in preserving the memory of the Scottish border wars, such was the Eclogue in perpetuating the history and traditions of the various tribes of the Arabian Peninsula. The peculiar construction of their language and the richness of its vocabulary afforded remarkable facilities for the metrical expression of ideas, and accordingly the art of *Munázarah*, or Poetic disputation, in which two rival chieftains advanced their respective claims to pre-eminence in extemporary verse, was brought to the highest perfection among them. Towards the end of the sixth century, an annual fair was established at a town called Ocadh, with the special object of encouraging poetical talent, and poets from every part of Arabia were in the habit of attending it and courting the criticism of their assembled fellow-countrymen. The successful compositions were inscribed in letters of gold, and suspended, by way of challenge, on the doors of the Kaäbeh, or temple, at Mecca, from which circumstance they acquired the name of *Modlakát* or "Suspended." Seven of the most celebrated of these prize poems have been handed down to

us, a translation of one of which is here presented to the reader. It is the composition of 'Antārāh, the son of Moáwiyeh ibn Sheddád, who lived shortly before the appearance of Mohammed. His mother was a slave, but the extraordinary valour and ability which he displayed induced his father to give him his freedom. The imagery of the poem, though vigorous, is, as we might expect, often extremely rude and erratic, passing with sudden transition from a gentle pastoral utterance to the fierce breathings of battle and revenge ; at one time dwelling fondly on the image of a beloved maiden, at another conjuring up, with grim delight, the image of a slaughtered foe. I have given it, as far as possible, in its native simplicity, without seeking, by suppression or embellishment, to adapt it to modern European taste.

The Argument.

[The poet hesitates to begin upon a hackneyed theme. He apostrophizes the spot where his mistress' camp had formerly stood ; laments the difficulties in the way of their union, arising from the enmity of their respective tribes. Describes his first meeting with her, and the consternation which he then felt at the prospect of her departure. Dwells upon her charms with some quaint and pleasing imagery, and contrasts her life of ease with his own life of danger and toil. At length he determines to follow her on a fleet she-camel, comparing it for swiftness to an ostrich, of which bird he introduces a humorous description. Reverting to his mistress, he impresses upon her his own virtues and nobility, concluding his self-recommendation with a proud boast of his own valorous exploits. This leads him to describe two single combats, in each of which he had slain a mighty hero. The bravery and nobility of his antagonists he enlarges upon with a view of enhancing the description of

his own warlike prowess. Again remembering his mistress, he alludes briefly to the circumstances of his first inquiry after her, but almost immediately resumes the narrative of his own valorous exploits, glorying in the importance with which his services are regarded by his tribe, of whom he is always the chosen champion. The description of a charge affords him opportunity for a pathetic allusion to his wounded horse. He comes at last to the subject of his poem, which is a vow of dire vengeance against two young men who have offended him, concluding with a cruel exultation over the fate of their father, who had fallen by his hand.]

HAVE, then, the poets left a theme unsung ?
Dost thou, then, recognise thy love's abode ?

Home of my Ablah ! dear for her sake !
Would that thy stones, Jewá, could speak to me.
Here have I often made my camel kneel,
Whose stately bulk, a very tower of strength,
Shall comfort me in my forlorn estate.
Ah ! Ablah dwells in lone Jewá, our tribe
In Hazn and far Samán have pitched their tents.
Hail ! prince of deserts, for since she hath gone,
Thy solitude is desolate indeed.

She made her dwelling in the foeman's land,
Who roar against me with a lion's rage ;
And now midst dangers I must seek my love.

I loved her 'ere I knew it, and my hand
Was raised the while to shed her kinsmen's blood !
I loved thee, Ablah,—by thy father's life
That love has cost me many a bitter pang,
That thou the daughter of a hated race,
Should'st be my heart's most loved and honoured
guest !
But thou hast left me, and thy kinsmen's herds
Feed in Oneizah, and in Gheilam mine.

'Ere thou did'st leave me, I beheld thy steeds
All stalled and saddled through the livelong night ;
Yet never dreamt I that the time drew nigh,
Till thy milch camels, lacking other food,
Cropped the unsavoury Khimkhim grains that grew
In rank luxuriance about the camp.
Full two and forty camels pastured there,
Black as the feathers of a raven's wing.

'Twas then her beauties first enslaved thy heart,
Those glittering pearls and ruby lips, whose kiss
Was sweeter far than honey to the taste.
As when the merchant opes a precious box
Of perfume, such an odour from her breath
Came towards thee, harbinger of her approach.

Or like an untouched meadow where the rain
Hath fallen freshly on the fragrant herbs,
That carpet all its pure untrodden soil.
A meadow where the frequent rain drops fall,
Like coins of silver in the quiet pools,
And irrigate it with perpetual streams ;
A meadow where the sportive insects hum,
Like listless topers singing o'er their cups,
And ply their forelegs like a man who tries
With maimed hand to use the flint and steel.

My Ablah sitteth night and day at ease
On downy cushions, while my nightly seat
Is on the hard back of my bridled steed.
My cushion is the saddle deftly set
Across the withers of a noble horse
With sturdy legs, plump shoulders, broad of
girth.

I have a camel of the Sheddan breed
Shall bear me fleetly to my loved one's side ;
A camel which like some devoted beast
Has purchased swiftness at the sacrifice
Of all joys which motherhood can bring.
With lashing tail she journeys through the night,

With stately gait, and makes the trembling hills
Resound beneath the clattering of her hoofs.
So speeds the crop-eared nimbly-stepping bird,
Whom broods of ostriches of smaller growth
Are trailing after at the even tide,
As Yemen camels their barbarian hind.
He leads the troop, and rears aloft his crest
As men raise canopies o'er new-made brides ;
He seeks his eggs in Zi'l Osheirah's vale,
And with his small head and his scanty plumes
Presents the figure of a slave boy dressed
In fury tunic all too short of skirt.
My camel drinks at Duhradeina's wells,
But turns and flees from Deilam's hostile stream.
She swerves and sways as though she turned away
From some fierce wild cat clinging to her flank,
Large headed, purring, prowling in the night :
Whene'er she turns her head to beat him off,
He straight assails her with his claws and teeth.
And when she kneels by Er Ridá, she seems
To kneel on crackling rushes, such a sound
The sun-baked mud gives forth beneath the weight.
The swarthy drops (like treacle, or like pitch
All bubbling in a cauldron on the fire)
Start round her ears, as swift she scours the plain,
Proud as a stallion envied by the herd.

Think not the barrier of a flimsy veil
Can shield thee, Ablah, from my fond regards,
When stalwart knights have found a steel cuirass
Of none effect against my furious thrust.

Speak only of me as you find me,—I
Am very gentle if I be not wronged,
But if they wrong me, my revenge is sure ;
Like gall and wormwood is the taste thereof.

I quaff the wine cup when the sun goes down,
Old wine that costs me many a shining coin,
And oft replenish from the stoppered jug
My crystal goblet curiously wrought.
In such carousing do I waste my wealth,
Yet is mine honour an exhaustless store.
If flushed with wine I make a liberal gift,
My sober moments ratify the boon,
For mine thou knowest is a generous soul.

Where'er descending falls my flashing blade,
Low lies the husband of some noble dame,
And like the whistling of a cloven lip,
The life-blood gurgles from his ghastly wound,
And spurts round him in a crimson shower.

But if my valour needeth warranty,
Go ask the hero horseman of thy tribe,
Ask them how fares it, when I once bestride
My steed, whom every lance by turns assails,
Now rushing singly to defy the host,
Now plunging headlong where the bowmen crowd.
Each glad survivor of the fierce affray
Will tell thee truly how I love the fight,
How little care I have to share the spoils.

The fiercest warrior armed *cap-d-piè*,—
No craven coward he to yield or fly,
But one whose onslaught e'en the bravest dread,—
Assails me ; grasping in my quick right hand
A lance, in fashion like a weaver's beam ;
I pierce his armour, run him through and through,
And read this lesson to the wondering hosts :—
“ That spears respect not birth or bravery ! ”
I leave his carcase for the beasts to rend,
To munch his fingers and his comely wrists.

There came a noble champion from the ranks
To win him glory and defend his right—
And, lo ! I pierced him through his coat of mail ;
For all he was the hero of his clan,

To whose accustomed hand came nought amiss,
The warrior's weapon or the gambler's dice,
To tear the standard from its bearer's grasp,
Or make the vintner haul his sign-board down
(For such a guest would leave him nought to sell).
Ah ! when he saw me from my horse alight,
And knew 'twas I had taken up his gage,
His lips were parted—but he did not *smile* !
I watched him lying at the close of day,
And 'twas not *henna* made that ruddy stain
Which tinged his fingers and his manly brow.
Poor lad ! his garments had not ill become
A poplar tree ; the sandals which he wore
Were tanned, in token of his royal birth ;
I ween his mother had not two such boys !
And yet I speared him, following up the thrust
With keen-edged sword of glittering Indian steel.

Sweet lamb ! how fair a booty would'st thou be
Were it but given me to call thee mine.
I called a little maiden from our tents
And bade her run and bring me back the news,
And thus she spake to me on her return :
“ I saw the foemen lulled by treacherous ease,
And whoso wills it his that lamb shall be.

Her neck is comelier than the graceful fawn's,
Her form is fairer than the young gazelle's!"

They tell me such an one requites my boons
With base ingratitude, it may be so :—
Ingratitude will on itself recoil.

I mind the precepts which my uncle gave,
I mind his counsels when I seek the field
Where many a lip with quivering terror curls
I mind his counsels in the battle's whirl,
Where cries for mercy only serve the more
To swell the volume of the deafening din.

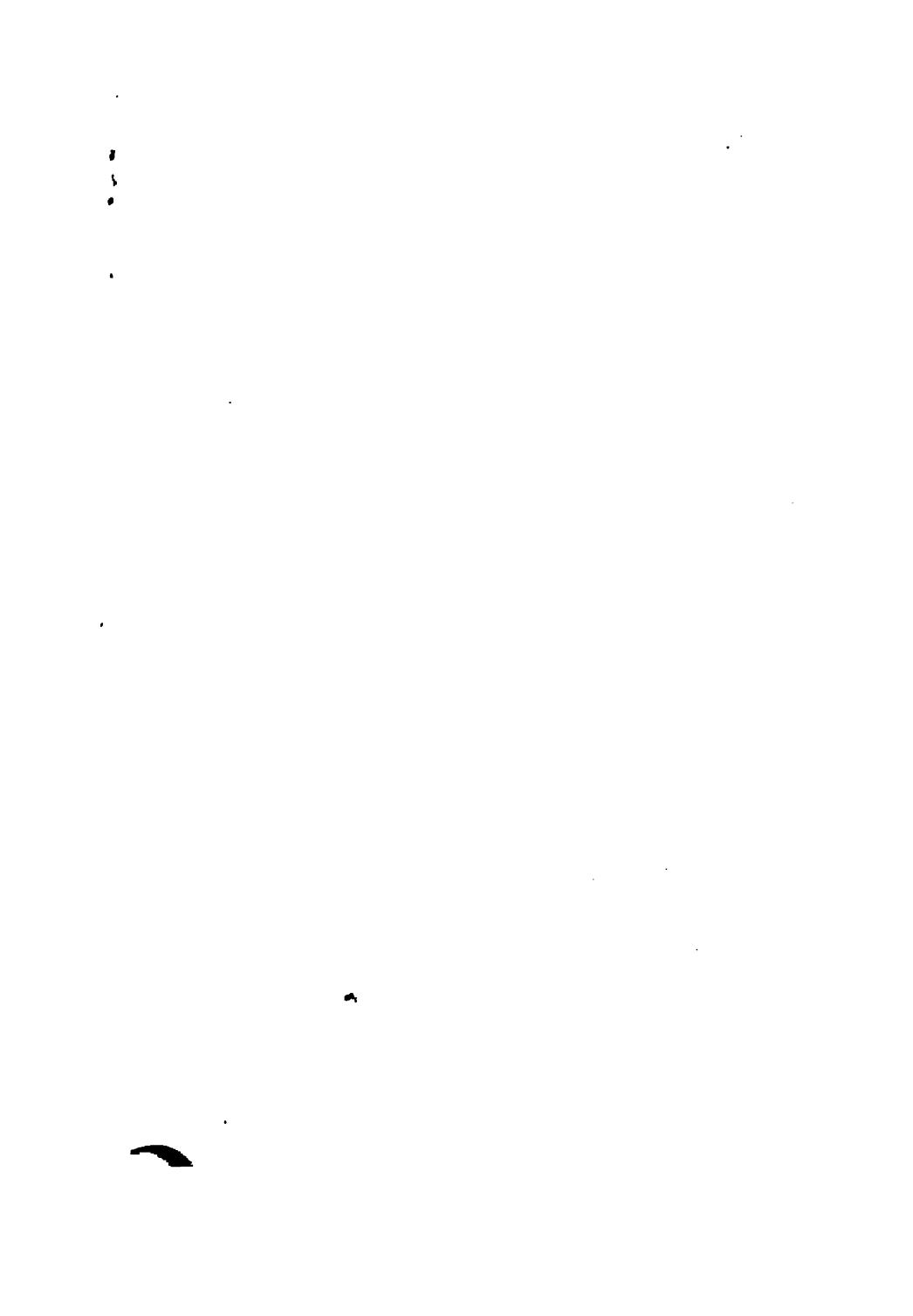
My comrades placed me in the foremost rank
To shield their bodies from the hostile spears ;
I shrank not then, or if I seemed to pause
'Twas but the press of the retreating hosts
That stopped my courser in his wild career.
And when I saw their rallying squadrons form,
I sought fresh triumphs in a fresh attack.
"Ho, 'Antarah to the rescue !" was the cry,
While spears were pointed at my charger's breast
Like cords that draw a bucket from the well.
I urged him forward, charging on the spears
Till wounds had woven him a bloody vest ;

Then turned he towards me with his tearful eyes,
And neighing plaintively bewailed his hurt.
Poor beast, he well-nigh gave his anguish words ;
He would have spoken but he knew not how !
Then came a clamour that revived my soul,
Our warriors shouting, “On ! brave 'Antarah, on !”
Stern-visaged horsemen o'er the plain careered
On prancing chargers of the goodliest breed,
And now—A camel bears me where I list
And turns obsequious at my least command.

I only tremble lest my death befall
Ere I have wreaked my vengeance on the brood
Of Dhemandhem, curs who dare asperse my fame
Whilst I restrain me from reviling them.
The pair have vowed that they will have my blood,
They threaten loudly—when I am not by !
Well let them threaten, *but I left their sire*
A feast for vultures and for beasts of prey.

II.

Original Pieces.



ORIGINAL PIECES.

—o—

I.

THE placid stream flowed on apace
Beneath the shady chestnut trees,
And decked with rippling smiles its face
Coquetting with the sportive breeze.

'Twas noon, and all around was still
Save in the bloom-bent boughs above,
The song-birds, with a merry trill,
Were pouring forth their notes of love.

But one was with me wandering there
Who lent the scene a greater charm,
A maiden fair, with wavy hair,
Who coyly leant upon my arm.

I heard her voice's silvery tone,
And gazed into her calm blue eyes,

Which seemed to watch within my own
The fondness I could not disguise.

Oh ! there are moments when the soul
Perforce its hidden depths reveals,
When bursting long imposed control,
The heart betrays the love it feels.

A pressure of the hand, a look,
For love, of language, has no need,
And there as in an open book
I gave her all my soul to read.

Then felt the flood-gates open fly,
And poured my secret in her ear,
And paused awhile for her reply
With hope, though somewhat mixed with fear.

It came, a little word that sent
Through all my frame a joyous thrill,
And gently on my arm there leant
Those tiny trembling fingers still.

The merry stream flowed on apace
Beneath the shady chestnut trees,
And, lo ! another smiling face
Was turned to catch the balmy breeze.

II.

O TURN on me those trustful eyes,
I love their glances soft and fond ;
Such liquid azure in them lies,
I seem to look through tranquil skies,
And catch a glimpse of heaven beyond.

Ah, me ! ere many days are past
Those lips must murmur an adieu !
But gaze upon me at the last
And when my tears are flowing fast,
That look shall teach me thou art true.

When far away across the sea
Alone 'mid strangers I shall dwell,
My fancy unrestrained and free
Shall bear me back once more to thee,
I've loved so long, and love so well.

In mem'ry, too, I oft shall seem
To wander, love, by thy dear side ;
As when by Granta's shaded stream
I saw thy face with pleasure beam,
When first I dared my love confide.

Thy lily hand shall seem once more
With gentle pressure clasped in mine ;
And through that pearl and ruby door
Shall floods of joyous music pour,
The music of thy voice divine.

Those wavy tresses oft shall float
Before my misty tear-dimmed sight ;
I'll think I hear a soft sweet note,
Just breathing from that snowy throat,
The word that fills me with delight.

Yes, loved one, though I roam afar
My heart shall know no trace of fear ;
Thou art my love, my own bright star,
And e'en though distance set a bar
To part us, thou wilt still be near.

III.

My heart is like a prisoned bird
Encaged within a darkened room,
When pining in the sullen gloom
His song of joy is never heard.

But soon as through the opening pane
A rosy streak of sunlight gleams,
He hails the soul-reviving beams
And sings his love-lay o'er again.

So longs my captive heart to see
The lovelight of thy lustrous eye :
The weary hours pass slowly by
When I am parted, love, from thee.

Yet often, like a cheering ray,
This thought shines through my darkest
mood ;
“ My hope will make its promise good,
My love will write to me to-day ! ”

AN ACROSTIC.

—o—

LIGHTLY the breeze o'er the meadow is blowing,
And sweet is the song of the bird in its nest ;
Under the willows the streamlet is flowing,
Reflecting the sunset that glows in the West.
And fair are the flow'rets that down by the waters

Droop over their mirror with maiden-like pride,
Ah me ! there's a flower amidst Granta's fair
daughters—
Vain, vain were their loveliness placed by her side :
If you gathered each blossom from earth's farthest
quarters,
She would still hold an empire none else could divide.

YE HOLE IN YE WALLE:

A LEGENDE OF WALTHAMSTOWE ABBEY.

—o—

P R E F A C E.

T O T H E R E A D E R.

ON pseudo-saints, Ignatian divines,
The following verses may appear hard Lynes ;
Such thin-skinned gentlefolk will hardly fail
To vote such railing quite “beyond the pale,”
Even in this “reading for the road and rail.”
If any take offence, not mine the sin, it
Was his amusement that my muse meant in it.
But long preambles damn a work ; one looks
For curtailed prefaces in dogs-eared books.
With this excuse, then, if your views it meets,
I'll cut the preface, you can cut the sheets.

YE HOLE IN THE WALLE.

Canto First.

THE iron tongue
Of the bell has rung
At the hour when the vesper hymn is sung,
And all in the Abbey of Walthamstowe
Tell over their beads,
As onward each speeds
To say his "*ave*" and "*ora pro;*"
For the rules of the convent have ordered it so
That all must go
To the chapel each night, if they like it or no.

The chaunting's began,
And the Abbot has run
His eye over all the stalls, and one
Is empty. Now where,
Thought the Abbot, is brother Jucundus? I swear.
That this is the last day of Walthamstowe fair,
And I shouldn't at all be surpris'd if he's there.

Then grim grew his features, and awful the look
Which he cast round the chapel, if haply some nook
Might contain the lost sheep that was straying;

But when sure of his absence, with passion he shook,
And wrathfully brandished his pastoral crook
In a manner extremely dismaying ;
And in lifting his eyes up so oft from the book,
Turned over the wrong leaf—the passage mistook,
And cursed when he should have been praying.

When they'd finish'd the Mass, and done all that's
habitual
To monks who are strict in observing the ritual,
They had supper, and turning their thoughts unto
matters
More earthly, talked platitudes over their platters.

And then, as all with wondering stare
Turned towards Jucundus' empty chair,
And winked at one another,
A murmur through the conclave ran
And each mysteriously began,
“ Why ! where on earth's our brother ? ”
Then darker grew the Abbot's brow,
And every one could see a row
Was pending, as he sternly asked,
“ When had they seen Jucundus last ? ”
Said one, “ At noon, not feeling well,
I sought my lonely, quiet cell,

There to tell over my beads and pray,
When on my ear a footstep fell,
And some one rung the porter's bell ;
Then I heard a voice to the porter say,
'Open the portals—Hugh, good day.'
It might have been brother Jucundus went out :
If you call up the porter he'll settle the doubt."

Two lay brothers stood at the Lord Abbot's back,
To wait on him at table and give him the sack,*
And he bade one be off and return in a crack,
With Hugh the porter, so that he might
Ascertain if the brother had spoken aright.
Off like a shot
Flew the servitor, not
Once stopping, till into the kitchen he got,
Where Hugh was regaling himself with a pot
Of that excellent beverage christened *egg-hot*.
But as I've just stated,
The lay brother waited
For nothing, and so Hugh's hot tipple was fated
To cool while he answered the summons ;
Though the act of obedience wasn't effected
Without a few adjectives neatly selected,

* *Nota Bene*.—Not *sack cloth* but *sack wine* is here meant,
A liquor regarded by him with endearment.

Affirming that “ Abbots was rum’uns.”
With a very low bow,
And a “ tug at his pow,”
In a manner that ostlers salute people now,
Hugh entered, the other announced him with “ Here is
The porter, Lord Abbot, to answer all queries.”
“ Porter Hugh,
Now tell me true,
Who was the brother let out by you
To-day, and where was he going to ? ”
Hugh replied, with a bow more profound than before,
“ To the brother Jucundus I open’d the door,
And he said he was going to visit the poor.”
“ That’s all I require,
You may straightway retire,”
Said the Abbot, his wrath waxing higher and higher ;
“ Jucundus I strongly suspect is a liar :
But I’ll wait for the issue,
And meanwhile I wish you
Good night, *pax vobiscum fratres*, I dismiss you.”

Canto Second.

'TWAS midnight, and the moonbeams shone
O'er Walthamstowe's now lonely aisles ;
A silv'ry radiance fell upon
The niche and pedestal, whereon
Our Lady's image smiles.
But what's that unaccustom'd sound
That wakens Hugh from his sleep profound ?
The clock of the abbey is striking four,
And some one knocks at the abbey door,—
A thing that Hugh
Never yet knew
(And he'd been the porter for many years, too,)
In the course of his life before.

Out of his bed
Hugh tumbled and said,
With a growl like a bear with a scalded head,
Or a 'Saturday' critic reviewing,
" There's that rascally Monk,
And I'll wager he's drunk :
If I were the Abbot I'd make him bunk
To the hole in the wall and lie there till he stunk,
Or he'll bring the whole abbey to ruin."

While he was grumbling
About the room, stumbling
Over the chairs and etceteras, fumbling
To get at a light, there continued a knocking
And kicking that really was perfectly shocking.
Rat, tat, like the roll of a drum that's played
To a posse of riflemen out on parade,
Never, I ween, was heard before
Such a noise as that at an abbey door.

Soundly, oh soundly, the Abbot sleeps !
And the tip of his nose
From under the clothes,
Like a rubicund bottle, peeps.
Loudly he snores like one oppress'd
By something he's eaten and can't digest ;
But to look at his face as he sleepeth there,
You might almost swear,
That in spite of nightmare,
No sound that the midnight air could bear
Would break the Abbot's rest.

If you did you'd be out,
Tho' there is not a doubt
For the knocker kick'd up such a deuce of a riot
That when all the others were awaken'd up by it,

The Abbot himself couldn't sleep on in quiet.
Up he arose,
Startled out of his doze,
Rat, tat,—“ What's that ?
There's that d—— cursèd cat,—
By the Mass—no ! it's something much louder than
that !
What on earth can it be ?
I'll go downstairs and see :
Oh, Maria beatissima, ora pro me.”

The Abbot lit a candle ; quickly drew
His breeches on, and softly down stairs went ;
But there no midnight ruffians met his view,
As he had feared they would, on plunder bent ;
But 'gainst the door-post, struggling with Hugh,
Jucundus, drunk as any fiddler, leant.
Hugh could not move him from his post a bit, and he
Sang “ Old King Cole,” and extracts from the
Litany !

Amazed at such a scene, with low'ring brow
The Abbot came up frowning to the spot,
And asked Jucundus very sternly, “ How
He dared behave so ? ” Ju said, “ Go to pot !
Old boy, it's no use kicking up a row,

But if you're game, come on, I'll take the lot!"
With this address he doubled up his fist,
Aim'd at the Abbot's head a blow, and—missed.

But though the Abbot 'scaped the blow, it lit
Upon a brother who was standing by,
And being a rather hard though random hit,
Almost knock'd out and quite bung'd up his eye :
Whereon, being roused into a sudden fit
Of rage, he at Jucundus straight let fly ;
They fell together, and began to pound
Each other, like two bull dogs, on the ground.

Jucundus being, as I have just observed,
Extremely drunk, got worsted in the fight ;
He caught a thrashing, which he well deserved,
And lay upon the ground in dismal plight.
Hugh, having to the task his sinews nerved,
Lifted him up, altho' not over light ;
Then to the cell his senseless body bore,
There laid him down, went out, and lock'd the door.

Oh drink ! fell demon that thou art,
In what dread crimes and deadly sins
Have men been brought to take a part
When by thee weaken'd on the pins ?

My present lay
Proves what I say,
It's excessively wrong for a man to give way
To intemperate habits ; but hold, not so fast !
In a story the moral should always come last.

Canto Third.

THE Abbot of Walthamstowe sat in his chair,
And his face wore a stern and unpitying air,
Such as priests of the Gospel ought not to wear :
Prior and Friars, they all were there—
A reverend conclave, I ween, they were.

The Abbot of Walthamstowe turn'd his head
Behind his chair—
For waiting there
Were the two lay brothers—and thus he said :
“ Now one of you haste to the culprit's cell,
Bring him before us, and guard him well ;
The other, run quickly and bring me a bell,
Bring me also the book which in chapel is read,
With a *mark* at the *Mass for the Souls of the Dead !*”

They brought him the book, and they brought him the
bell,

And they fetch'd the culprit from out of his cell,
And a pitiful look that prisoner gave
As he cast his eye o'er the solemn conclave.

All was ready, you might have heard
A pin as it fell, not a brother stirred
As the prior, at a nod from the Abbot, began
To read the indictment—and thus it ran :—

Ye Indycemente.

“ You, Jucundus, a priest of the Church, and a monk,
Stand indicted with getting indecently drunk ;
Thereby setting at nought
The precepts taught
By holy Church ; and, moreover, committing
A breach of our laws :
You must, therefore, show cause
Why you should not be dealt with as may be thought
fitting
By the Lord Abbot, now ‘ *In Judicio* ’ sitting !

Secundo,—You’re charged with unlawfully making
A noise, riot, hubbub, and din, thereby waking

Us up in the small hours,—to wit, four o'clock in
The morning, said noise being principally knocking.”
Here all of the brethren exclaim'd, “Oh how shock-
ing !”

Then a worthy old Friar,
Who acted as crier,
Being very intent on the words of the Prior,
Felt this interruption quite rousing his ire,
And cried “Silence !” which, like adding fuel to fire,
Rais'd the tumult and clamour still higher and
higher,—
For every one trying
To put down his neighbour, at once began crying,
“Turn him out !” “Hold your tongue !” It was quite
edifying
To observe the vast trouble the brothers were taking
To quell the disturbance themselves were all making.
But the Abbot, at last
Esteeming it past
All bearing, said, “If they weren't quiet, he quite
meant
To clear the court first, and then read the indict-
ment.”
This keeping them silent, the Prior proceeded,—
I'll give the third count in the same words as he did.

“*Tertio et ultimo*,—You are accused
Of having unlawfully mocked and abused
The Lord Abbot, and likewise most shamefully used,
Assaulted, maltreated, beat, battered, and bruised
Brother Cuthbert, whereby
You have blackened his eye.”
Here Jucundus’ dander, as Yankees say, “riz,”
And he answered, “ ‘Twas he that first damaged my
phiz.”
But Cuthbert replied, “That’s a lie! for I’m blessed
if I
Wasn’t struck first,—*that* the Abbot can testify.”
But the rest of the trial I need not report,
Suffice it to say, ere they broke up the court
A verdict of guilty was found, and the prisoner
Offer’d the choice of a cord round his wizen, or
“*Inire dum vivat sepulchrum in muro*,”*
A fate worse than the Austrian “*in carcere duro*.”
Poor Jucundus replied, “Since I’ve got to decide
In which of these ways my existence I’ll yield up,
I think, Holy Father, an’t please you, I’d rather
Be put in the wall and hermetically † sealed up.”

* To those who no knowledge of Latin have pick’d up,
This means put a hole in the wall and then brick’d up.

† Be so kind, for the sake of my rhythm, as to run
The two latter syllables here into one.

Canto Fourth.

SOLEMNLY rolled,
Through those cloisters old,
The sound of the “passing bell,” that tolled
For him whose spirit should soon be free
From the trammels of mortality.

Solemn and slow,
Onward they go,
Through the “long drawn aisles” of Walthamstowe ;
Abbots and Monks, a goodly throng,
Leading along
The brother Jucundus, who’d come it so strong
In drinking and fighting, and that was wrong ;
And in that train
Were masons twain,
Two sturdy men and strong.
What are the words so impressively read
By the Abbot, who’s marching along at their head ?
He’s reading the *Mass for the Souls of the Dead*.

But see, a little Acolyte is running on before,
And in his hand he bears a key to open yonder door,

A massive door, all studded o'er with iron nails : you
know
Such doors as these were all the cheese in abbeys long
ago.

That Acolyte with all his might tugs at it ; and when
thrown
Wide open there's a flight of stairs, I should say steps
of stone,—
They lead down to the crypt, a kind of cellar under-
ground,
Towards which it's plain to see that train of solemn
Monks are bound.

Ah me ! it was a fearful sight :
In that ancient crypt, where the tapers' light
Could scarcely pierce the gloom,
They thrust him into that wall of stone ;
Then blocked him up, and left him alone
To meet a fearful doom.

Now it should have been stated some stanzas ago,
That as well as the Abbey at Walthamstowe,
Was another establishment, used by a set
Of religious recluses, whose name I forget ;

At least I can't bring back to my recollection
The name of the saint 'neath whose special protec-
tion

The order was founded ; but I've understood
They were called the St. *Somebody's* Dumb Brother-
hood ;

But though I say "dumb," it must not be supposed
'Twas an order of natural dummies composed ;—
They were only fanatics, who, wishing to reach
Heaven, imagined that once at the wicket,
Having taken a vow of abstaining from speech,
Would be held by St. Peter sufficient pass ticket.
Their monastery stood just about a stone's throw
From the scene of Jucundus' freaks, which you
know

Was called merely the Abbey of Walthamstowe.

Let us now take a peep at that cellar so deep
Where Jucundus was blocked up to sleep his last
sleep ;

When he found they had all gone and left him alone,
Tightly fixed in a wall which he fancied was stone,
He at once began praying,
To all the saints saying
“ *Mea culpa—peccavi,*” with lots of “ *ora* ”-ing ;
Nota bene—don't take the above for “ *huzza* ”-ing.

He didn't sufficiently like his position,
To give vent to any such mad ebullition ;
He cried "*miserere*"
Until he grew weary,
And finding the "Hole in the wall" rather dreary
Indulged in a very profane exclamation,
Which we'll give in its mollified form of "tarnation."

Well, "tarnation!" he cries,
And likewise applies
A polite epithet to the limbs and the eyes
Of the Abbot for putting him into the fix ;
At the same time against the wall viciously kicks,
Till he finds to his wonder he's loosen'd some bricks ;
For the wall, by good luck, though a moderately
thick one,
And coated on one side with stone, was a brick one.

How his spirits arose
When, redoubling his blows,
The mortar gives way and an aperture shows ;
His work he ne'er ceases
Until it increases
To two or three feet wide,—then through it he goes.

Oh ! 'tis a glorious thing to stand
On the shore and gaze on the deep blue sea,
And feel the innermost soul expand
With the joyous sense of liberty.

But those who never yet have known
The oppression of a tyrant's sway,
Ne'er been in gloomy dungeons thrown,
Debarr'd from e'en the light of day,
Can't paint the wild ecstatic glee
A prisoner feels when first set free.

'Twas just this " wild ecstatic glee "
Jucundus felt when he was free,
When through the aperture he crept,
And on the ground in freedom stept,
He whistled, caper'd—almost wept.

He stood within a crypt that seemed
Like that he'd left in all save gloom,
For moonlight through a grating stream'd,
And shone upon his quondam tomb.

By its light he espied
A door at the side
Of the vault, which he ran to directly and tried ;
It yielded at once to the kick he applied.

He passed through the door
And ran up a score
Of stone steps, I won't say that there weren't a few
more ;
At the top of the flight,
He then saw a strange sight—
A chapel, an altar with tapers a-light,—
Incense and crucifix, everything quite
En regle for duly performing each rite
Of the Catholic Church, in the dead of the night,
And kneeling before it some Monks all in white ;
But never a word
Of the service was heard,—
They pray'd on in silence not one of 'em stirred.

Jucundus look'd up, and Jucundus look'd down,
And he saw hanging up on a peg an old gown.
As soon as he twigg'd it,
He sneak'd up and prigged it,
As thieves purloin pewters off railings in town.

Off with his prize
Towards the crypt he then flies,
Creeping stealthily down stairs for fear of surprise,

There he took off his own gown, and having consigned
it
To the "Hole in the Wall," that he might again find
it,
He put on the other, which, though rather shabby,
Made him look like the rest of the Monks in that
abbey ;
And on going again up the flight of stone stairs,
Perceived that the Monks had all finished their prayers.
So making his mind up what course to pursue,
He went stealthily over and joined the last few
Who were leaving the chapel, and none of them knew
That a stranger had joined them, because he was
dressed,
As I've just now informed you, the same as the rest,
Or if any one saw him no questions were pressed ;
For the convent in which
He had happened to pitch
Was that of the Dummies as doubtless you've guessed.

He mixed with the throng, who went slowly along
The passage, not dreaming of anything wrong,
Till they came to a lot of stone cells in a row,
Into one of which having seen each of them go ;
Jucundus perceiving that yet three or four
Were left empty, turned in for the night, and before

He'd been lying down in it
The space of a minute
Was soundly asleep and beginning to snore.

When the next morning broke,
Jucundus awoke,
The clock of the convent was just on the stroke
Of seven, which here, by the by, I'll observe is
The hour when most convents begin morning service.

He opened the door,
And saw three or four more
Going to Mass,—these he joined as before:
Attended the service, and when 'twas all o'er,
And he'd gone into breakfast along with the rest,
They first seem'd to notice their unbidden guest.

Every one's eyes
Were turned in surprise
On him then, though not one of them all could surmise
How he got there,—if he'd dropp'd from the skies,
Or whether he came like those gentry who rise
Through trap doors in plays, or jump down from the
flies ;
But as they didn't ask him, he didn't enlighten 'em,
Though very considerately, lest he should frighten 'em,

To show he was real flesh and blood, he demolished
The viands before him, and when he had polished
Quite clean the platter of one of the brothers,
He turned round and helped himself out of another's.

They stared at this cool exhibition of “cheek,”
And some of them actually got up to speak,
But remembered their vow just in time, and instead
Of doing so, gave him a large piece of bread
And a plate to himself full of fine collared head ;
For though I can't praise
The monks of those days,
Charity always was one of their *traits*.

They soon got accustomed to seeing him there,
And he being a punctual attendant at prayer,
And ready to lend a hand, very soon grew
To be thought quite one of them—a favourite too.

Things went on in this way
For some time, till one day,
Nearly two years from his sudden *entrée*,
On it striking him strong,
That living so long
Without any amusement was certainly wrong,

He resolved upon having a bit of a spree,
As he called it, just to prevent *ennui*.

Oh how nice it would be
On a fine night, thought he,
To get over the wall when nobody could see,
And roam through the village so merry and free :
Then he thought of the tavern, the glasses of gin,
He would have if he got there,—but, ah ! he'd no tin,
And if minus the needful he'd better stop in.

Amongst other old proverbs I've heard people say,
“Where there's a will there is always a way ;”
So it proved in this case, for when he got thinking
On gin (the fact was he'd a weakness for drinking),
The will being strong,
It was not very long
Before the way darted across him “like winking.”

He had happened to notice the Abbot one day,
When he had some of the tradesmen to pay,
Go into the room where the strong box was kept,
And deposit the key in the room where he slept.

The temptation was great, and he couldn't resist it,
So he borrowed the key, and before they had missed it

(As he thought), having helped himself out of the strong box,
Went back to replace it, but got in the wrong box :
For the Abbot came in as he opened the drawer,
And, just peeping over his shoulder, soon saw
What he was after ; then grasping him tight
By the arms, in such way that he couldn't show fight
Or offer resistance,
He knocked for assistance,
And when it arrived the whole thing came to light ;
For on searching his pockets they found all the cash :
A discovery that settled Jucundus's hash.

They took him down stairs to the great dining hall,
Where several tablets were hung on the wall,
On which all the orders and rules were indited,
At one of which Ju felt extremely affrighted :
For there was a clause in great letters revealing
These words, " If a Brother's caught picking or stealing,

The best way of dealing
With him is by sealing
Him up tight, as good bricks and mortar can make
him,
' In a hole in the wall,' then the devil may take
him ! "

They took him down stairs to the crypt, and then
brought a
Pickaxe and shovel, some bricks and some mortar,
But seeing the hole in the wall ready shaped,
From which two years back he'd so strangely escaped,
They thrust him inside it, and very soon knocked up
A strong wall behind it, and there he was blocked up.

Canto Fifth.

As in Walthamstowe Abbey that evening they sat
At supper, the Abbot (now grown very fat)
Spoke of Jucundus, whom two years ago
They'd immured in the wall of the cellar below,
And said that he rather regretted the sentence
Then passed, as it left him no time for repentance ;
And dying without being shrived or confessed,
Would be adverse, he feared, to their late Brother's
rest.

But as what had been done could not now be undone,
he
Recommended them all to contribute some money

Towards purchasing candles to burn there at night,
Which plan he'd no doubt would set matters all right.

At this proposition no Brother demurred,
And when they'd assented a strange noise was heard,
As of somebody singing "*Te Deum*" below !
They listen'd and found that it really was so.
" But that voice,—my good gracious ! it cannot be—
no !
It's all fancy !—hark there !—by the Mass it's not
though !!! "

With this exclamation,
In great consternation,
The Abbot fell back in his chair ; while, with fright,
The rest began bawling,
And some of them falling
Under the table, quite vanish'd from sight.

On recov'ring, the Abbot,
By making a grab at
The Prior, succeeded in standing upright,
And addressing the others,
Said, " Come, rev'rend brothers,
Get up, I'm ashamed at your cowardice quite."

When their presence of mind was restored once again,
On discussing the matter, they all said 'twas plain
The intention of purchasing lights they'd expressed
Had procured the lamented Jucundus his rest ;
And, no doubt, they had just heard the ghost of
deceased
Rejoice that his pangs purgatorial had ceased ;
And then they declared 'twould be treating him very
ill,
Not to accord him an honourable burial.

Proverbs say, to delay
Is dangerous, so they
Determin'd not even to wait till next day,
But that evening to break
The vault open, and take
Out his "canonised bones," and hold what's called a
"wake."

That is, watch 'em all night
By the bright taper's light
(In Ireland they usually end with a fight).

So down stairs they hied,
Taking care to provide

Pickaxes and crowbars ; they took down beside
The bier that was used when the last Abbot died.

At the very first stroke
Of the pickaxe, which broke
Away part of the wall, Jucundus awoke
(For he'd fallen asleep), and conjecturing shrewdly
They were letting him out, thought, that if he spoke
rudely,
And gave vent to his joy in a strong exclamation,
It might perhaps gain him a bad reputation,
And be likely to cost him a third immolation ;
He therefore sang out, in his very best psalm tone,
The entire "*De Profundis*," then said in a calm tone,
" So you have come at last : well, St. Mary be blest,
I've had these last two years *a pretty good rest !*"
Just picture their wonder at hearing this said
By a man they had long since imagin'd was dead ;
When they open'd the wall, too, conceive their sur-
prise,
At first they could scarcely believe their own eyes
On seeing him stand there alive, not at all
The worse looking for being two years in a wall.

He stepped from the niche and exclaimed "*Benedicite,*"
Turn'd up his eyes and played saint to a nicety.

The Abbot with rev'rence, surprise, and alarm,
Was greatly confused, but he offer'd his arm
To Jucundus, and said, as he begged to escort him
Upstairs to the supper room, had he have thought
him

So holy a man, as 'twas clear he must be,
He'd have never passed any such sentence ; but he
Expressed great contrition, hoped Ju wouldn't doubt
it,

And when they got upstairs would tell all about it.
They arrived in the room, and Jucundus prepared
To tell them a *story*, of how he had fared,
Which he did in the following words, his veracity
Being certainly less than his native loquacity :

“I committed a sin, Brothers, two years ago,
For which I was punished, as all of you know,
But my penitence being both great and sincere,
I resigned myself to it without any fear,
And while counting my beads felt a drowsiness creep
Over me, so that I soon fell asleep.

“Then St. Mary appear'd in a vision, and said
‘Fear not, for ere two years have pass'd o'er your head
You'll be Abbot of this in the present one's stead ;’
She pointed this way and the sweet vision fled.

Since then I have felt neither hunger nor pain,
And some hours back I saw the same vision again :
'Jucundus,' it said, 'the two years have expired,
Prepare ! for your presence will soon be required ;'
Then I sang the '*Te Deum*',—you know what transpired."

When the Abbot heard this he got quite in a fright,
But thought the best thing he could do was to write
To the Pope, and request his advice how to act :
This he did, and explain'd in detail every fact.

When the Pope got the letter all duly attested
By the Monks of the abbey, he thought as the rest
did,

They should act as the saint had already suggested.
So there being a convent whose Abbot was dead,
They elected the Walthamstowe one at its head,
And his mitre was worn by Jucundus instead.

Now the Pope, on considering this wonderful history
(He never got at the real clue to the mystery),
Laid the whole matter before the Consistory ;
They, deeming a man who could live in a wall
For two years without eating or drinking at all,

And who never felt hungry, or weary, or faint,
Must be very holy,—soon made him a saint ;
If you wish to know more of his life, you must look
In the “ *Vitæ Sanctorum*,”—I haven’t the book.

You won’t be offended,
If now my tale’s ended,
A few lines are by way of a

Moral Appendix :

Don’t too often indulge in the sociable bowl,
Till you don’t know a psalm from such songs as
“ King Cole,”
Or some day you’ll get yourself into a *hole*.

Don’t strike Abbots, and always remember a thief
Is certain some fine day of coming to grief ;
If you’re very hard up, why, get parish relief.
And lastly, my readers, I’d have you fight shy
Of all sorts of Saints, be they Low Church or High.
There’s a proverb may well to this class be applied—
“ Often under a cassocke ye Deville doth hide.”

A LEGEND OF BARNWELL ABBEY.

"Ombre mostrommi, e nominolle a dito,
Ch'amor di nostra vita dispartille."—DANTE.

'TWAS in the good old times of yore,
When Saxon monarchs held the sway ;
Ere William stepped on Hasting's shore,
And with his Norman rifling corps,
Stole Harold's crown and life away.

Ere barons, counts, or knights, were known,
But noble swells were franklin'd, thane'd,
In fact when on the English throne
King Edward the Confessor reigned.

In Cambridge dwelt a mighty Thane
Who owned estates so vast and fine,
Of vassals he'd the longest train
Upon the Eastern Counties line.

His steward had a daughter fair,
Words fail to paint that blooming maid,
Her clear blue eyes, her golden hair,—
Could you have seen those tresses rare,
You'd say some sportive sunbeam there
Had round her forehead played.

My “pretty bairn,” her father cried,
When first he held her on his knee;
“A ‘pretty bairn,’ indeed,” replied
Each neighbour with admiring e'e.

And ever from that hour her fame
For beauty and for goodness grew,
And “pretty bairnie” was the name
By which the folks our maiden knew.

.
The Thane upon his dais sat,
His napkin tucked beneath his chin ;
A haunch of venison full fat
Two serving men brought in, and that
He tucked beneath his skin.

A boar's head, one himself had slain,
Of all its flesh was deftly shorn ;

For being a stalwart brawny Thane,
He had a natural taste for brawn.

“ What ho !” quoth he, “ let wine be brought,
Methéglin of the very best : ”
’Twas done, and at one draught a quart
Went the same quarter as the rest.

“ Come, varlets, tell what may be done,
My after dinner hours to while ? ”
“ My lord,” quoth they, “ your jester’s fun ”—
“ Pooh ! stuff ! ” he cried, “ such fools I shun,
I can’t digest their jests, not one
Has ever won from me a smile.”

“ I feel just here a sort of void ! ”
(A tap upon his thorax followed)
Each to himself repeated, “ Void !
And after all he’s been and swallowed ! ”
He saw their meaning, looked annoyed,
And in a voice of thunder hallo’d ;
“ Ye saucy knaves, quick answer for your life,
What is’t I want ? ” “ My lord,” said they, “ a wife.”

“ A wife, that’s not a bad idea,
I’ve thought the same myself of late.

Go bring my favourite palfrey here,
And bring me, too, my riding gear,
I'll start and look about me straight.
Mayhap that in my large estate
I'll chance to find a fitting mate."

His vassals soon did his behest,
Across the palfrey's back he strode ;
And with a posy at his breast,
Our dandy Thane a courting rode.

He, too, had seen the rustic maid,
Her charms he in his mem'ry bore,
And now the words his vassals said,
Inflamed his bosom more and more.

"My wife," cried he, "this bairn shall be,
I care not for her low estate,—
A dame of ancient pedigree
Would more a plague than comfort be—
So zounds ! I'll wed her straight."

Thus holding with himself discourse,
The Thane rode on with heart elate ;
He held his course, until his horse
Stopped at the "pretty bairnie's" gate.

The steward sat at his door at ease
Sipping his ale and humming a lay,
When what doth he see thro' a vista of trees,
But his master the Thane out riding that way.

“Quick hie thee, my daughter !” he lustily cried,
“Put on thy goodliest garment of all,
For the Thane, my master, is out for a ride,
And I fancy he’s going to give us a call.

But the “ pretty bairnie ” just smoothed her hair
Away from her forehead with childish grace,
And turned her to look up the roadway where
The Thane on his palfrey was riding apace.

“Good morrow,” quoth he with a courteous mein,
“I ask your leaves to make my bow
To yonder little bonnie quean ;
Hey bailie ! she’s passing fair, I vow.

“I’ve mounted on my favourite steed
Ere my dinner was fairly in my inside,
And hither I’ve come at the top of my speed,
To ask thee, fair maiden, to be my bride.

“High on the hill my castle stands,
I'll build a sweet bower within it for thee,
Full are my coffers and broad my lands,
Vassals shall serve thee on bended knee,
And as far as the prospect around us expands
All, all shall be thine if thou'l marry with me.”

She replied, as warm blushes her cheek overspread,
“I care not for wealth, sir, I told you so one day ;
Nought could ever induce me your honour to wed,
For altho' you're a Thane, sir, your nose is so red—
You're as ugly as sin on a Sunday.

“Even were you good-looking, and not such a fright,
I couldn't accept you, pray don't take it ill,
For when we were children my troth did I plight
To handsome young Egbert who lives at the mill.”

The Thane he swore a fearful oath,
A guttural Saxon oath he swore,
To have revenge upon them both ;
And chafing sore,
He mounted on his steed once more,
And turned and left the cottage door.

At eventide young Egbert walked
To the trysting tree to meet his fair,
Four ruffian forms behind him stalked,
Four upraised knives in the moonbeam's glare.

Little he recked of the danger nigh
Till he felt from his body the life-blood flow,
Then with a wild unearthly cry
He turned and faced his ruthless foe ;
And e'er he sank on the ground to die
Four times he dealt a mighty blow,
Four cowardly knaves were laid full low.

Young Egbert fell upon the ground, and then
One of his murderers raised his head ;
“ All right,” quoth he, “ you may rise, my men,
I don’t think the miller will hit us again,
For I’m summat afeared he’s dead.”

The ruffians turn four bloodshot eyes
(Their four others were bunged up as close as wax)
To where poor Egbert all gory lies,
Then hoist up the body upon their backs
And make, as they say in America, tracks.

To a well by the wayside they carried the corse,
And down it the villains determined to chuck it ;
They did so without the least tinge of remorse,
And Egbert the second time kickéd the bucket.

• . . .
This well had been the trysting-place,
For many a day, of the loving pair ;
And the “bairnie” was watching with anxious face
Expecting her lover to meet her there.

With an anxious look up the road she gazed,
But the form of her lover fell not on her view,
“What can have delayed him,” she muttered amazed,
And an icy chillness upon her grew.

She heard a solemn and heavy tramp,
A raven uttered a dismal croak,
She trembled, her forehead with dew grew damp,
And she ran to hide her behind an oak.

She saw it all,—her lover’s form
On the deep well’s brink she saw them place,
The blood trickled over it ruddy and warm,
And the moon shone full on his pale, pale face.

A heavy splash on her senses fell,
One wild despairing shriek she gave ;
A bound, a leap, and the dank cold well
Was two fond lovers' mutual grave.

• • • •

Those ruffians came to the Thane and told
How they'd murdered the youth and seen the
maid
Drown herself too, then they asked for the gold
Which was to have been for their guerdon paid.

He bade them tarry, and told them all
Their payment should be both prompt and fair.
In less than an hour, from the castle wall,
Their corpses swung in the midnight air.

• • • •

Six quarts of Methéglin he drank that night,
Six servitors carried him up to bed,
Six times he awoke in a terrible fright,
Six phantoms were grinning around his head.

• • • •

The Eastern sky is tinged with red
As the morning over the castle breaks,

And rosy hues fall on his bed,
Whereat the Thane remorseful quakes.

For as ruddy streaks through the casement pour,
He recalls with horror the blood he's shed ;
Each ray of sunlight seems like gore
That calls for vengeance on his head.

"Oh, fetch a confessor, for Marie's sake,
Let a holy priest to my bedside hie ;
I would that he shrive me, before I take
My leave of the world, for I sicken, I die !"

One hideous groan and the spirit hath flown
From yon portly lump of lifeless clay ;
Dead as a herring and cold as a stone
The Thane on his deathbed lay.

An Austin friar beside him stands,
And smiles as his eyes run over a scroll ;
Bequeathing the whole of the Thane's broad lands
To that worthy order, to pray for his soul.

There's a clause which directs that an abbey be
built
On the spot where the murdered lovers fell,

And in memory then of its founder's guilt,
They called it the Abbey of Bairnie's Well

And "Bairnie's Well" Abbey full soon became
Barnwell as we of the present day spell ;
So but for this ditty, you see, the name
Would have lost its tail, and its tale as well.

THE DEVIL TO PAY.

A LEGEND OF THE TIMES OF KING JAMES THE FIRST.



PART I.

SIR ROWLAND MACKAY

Was a citizen gay,
And he lived in the times of King James ; in whose day,
I need hardly say,
At witchcraft and sorcery folks were *au fait*.

When attended by rats
Or ugly black cats,
Rheumatic old ladies would be such great flats
As on broomsticks to ride, at the risk of their necks,
To a spot which a dingy old party selects,
There to play up old gooseberry, good people to vex.

Sir Rowland Mackay was a regular beau,
His dress and deportment were quite *comme il faut* ;
He sang well, he talked well, and then he could dance
With the best professeur that e'er came out of France.

His air so *dégagée*, his manners so gay,
So enchanted the fair,
One and all would declare
That the dearest of men, was Sir Rowland Mackay.

The great Lord Chamberlain, in his hand
The golden stick of office bore,
Never was nobleman in the land,
Half so honoured, or half so grand,
Or half so proud, before.
There's a ball at the palace, a gorgeous affair,
All the beauty and rank of the nation was there ;
Whole suites of apartments were blazing with light,
And ladies whose lovely eyes sparkled as bright
As the gems they were wearing, made up such a sight
As the "Morning Post's Own
Correspondent" alone
Would a faithful description be able to write :
And our handsome young knight
Sir Rowland Mackay, had received an invite.
The great Lord Chamberlain had but one daughter,
To the palace, that night for the first time, he brought
her :
Never before to supper or rout,
Balls with refreshments or parties without,

Had the young lady been ;
She was just seventeen,
In Belgravian parlance, she'd just then come out.

Sir Rowland approached the lovely girl,
His hand for the next quadrille she took ;
As he led her forth in the mazy whirl,
Merrily danced each wavy curl
Upon her faultless neck of pearl,
Like sunshine on a brook.
Sweet as the music of the spheres
Her silvery tones on his senses pour,
Never had his enchanted ears
Such melody heard before ;
And o'er and o'er
To himself he swore
So help him Bob ! he'd flirt no more.

The ball was over, Sir Rowland Mackay,
With the rest of the company, hurried away :
And jumping into his cabriolet,
Drove off at the speed of a railway train
To his splendid mansion in Mincing Lane.

Sir Rowland Mackay went home to bed,
His eyes felt heavy as lumps of lead,
So pulling his nightcap over his head,

He soundly and quietly slept.
But as soon as ever he sank in a doze,
A form he saw resting upon the bedclothes,
Entirely destroying all hopes of repose,
And there all night it kept.

Sir Rowland sighed
And vainly tried
To get off to sleep, but the nightmare defied
All his endeavours, and still would ride
On his chest, till at last he despairingly cried,
“ Avaunt ! thou phantom of the brain !
Why the deuce did I drink such a lot of champagne ! ”
But he looked again,
And saw very plain,
By the moonbeams that shone thro’ the window pane,
Instead of the figure that caused him such pain,
The daughter of the Lord Chamberlain.
A rapturous kiss on his lips she pressed,
O’erpow’ring emotions seemed swelling her breast,
Then heaving a deep, deep sigh, she broke
The deathlike stillness, and thus she spoke :
“ Dearest Rowland, I love you ”—then Rowland awoke !
For the incubus, lady and kisses, were all
The consequent nightmare succeeding the ball.

He woke, but still that vision bright
Haunted him throughout the night,
Whichever way he turned his eyes
Her image would before him rise,
That kiss, although he knew full well
'Twas but a dream from fancy flowing,
Charmed him like a powerful spell,
And made his bosom heave and swell,
As on his lips he felt it glowing.

In fact, from all that we've stated above,
To cut my protracted narration much shorter,
'Twas clear that Sir Rowland was deeply in love
With the haughty Lord Chamberlain's beautiful daughter.

'Twas morning, Sir Rowland still feeling inflamed
With the charms of fair Alice (for so she was named),
Tittivated himself with a great deal of care,
Sent out for a barber to frizzle his hair,
And scented his 'kerchief with perfume most rare.
His doublet was velvet, his hose was of silk,
His ruffles were lace and were whiter than milk;
But as I much fear that my readers will balk
A description of costume, at once I will tell
That Sir Rowland was got up a wonderful swell.

Thus gaily attired he set off to the palace
In which with her father resided his Alice.
He rubbed up the speeches so often he'd tried on
Occasions like these ; he was well up in Dryden,
With whose poetry he overcame every resistance—
For as Tom Moore and Byron were not in existence,
He was forced to dispense with, of course, their assistance,
Though when courting a damsel he often could force
her
To yield up her heart, by quotations from Chaucer.
For then, as at present, in love declarations
Nothing helped on a suit half so well as quotations.

Arrived at the palace he found to his joy
That the Chamberlain wasn't at home,—but a boy
Who had answered the summons exclaimed with a grin,
“ If you'd like to see young Mistress Alice, *she's* in,
And I just heard her say,
If you *should* call to-day,—
But mum is the word, sir—I'll show you the way.”
When he finished, Sir Rowland took good care to slip
In his ready-stretched palm an uncommon good “ tip.”
Then following the urchin who, opening a door,
Admitted him into the lady's boudoir.
Alice rose to receive him, and blushed rosy red,
As extending her hand in a low voice she said,

“O Sir Rowland—you’ve startled me so, I declare !—
Who could have expected you ?—pray take a chair.”
Well, they chatted and chatted till Alice began
To think she had ne’er seen so nice a young man ;
Ere the interview closed they had got on so far,
That the lady herself had referred him to Pa !

With heart beating high
The young knight said, Good-bye ;
Ere he went, though, he pressed on her lips—but, oh fie !
In such matters, dear reader, we ought not to pry.
So let’s be content
With stating—he went
To ask Alice’s father to give his consent.

He saw the Lord Chamberlain ; opened his battery
In the stereotyped manner with personal flattery,
Said he’d never before seen his Lordship so gay
Or so hearty and well as he looked on that day.
The fatigue and the trouble attending the ball
Didn’t seem to have told on his Lordship at all ;
He was looking so charming, ’twas really a treat,
And he begged that his Lordship would give the receipt
Which he used, for ’twas clear that, to tell the whole
truth,
He’d been passing the night in renewing his youth—

When he fancied he'd dosed him enough, the demand
He made for his daughter's (fair Alice's) hand.

His Lordship, who'd, late on the night before, stayed up,
And with whom the champagne had "old gooseberry"
 played up,

Thinking the knight had come there to make game of him,
Muttered under his breath (it was really a shame of him)
"D—d puppy, I'll have him kicked out of my grounds"—
When Sir Rowland proposed, then his rage knew no
 bounds,

But summoning up all his hauteur, he tried
To calm down his feelings, and huskily cried—
"My daughter, Sir Rowland, shall never unite
With a lord, and much less with a beggarly knight;
I've a much higher union for Alice in store,
Good morning, Sir Rowland—hem!—yonder's the door."

Sir Rowland went home in as sweet state of mind
As a Royal Bengal tiger, just caught and confined,
With a Hindoo outside of his cage, nice and fat,
Whom he wants for his dinner, but cannot get at.

He walked up and down
With a terrible frown,
Upset every fruit-stall he found in the town,

Took away from the Ludgate a criminal's head,
Which he threw at a watchman and left him for dead.
Though each step that he took he'd some outrage com-
mit, he
Arrived safely at last at his home in the City.

'Twas midnight : Sir Rowland, alone in his room,
Sat buried in thought, in the midst of the gloom,
For the lamp had gone out and the household retired,
Not thinking their master aught further required.
At the table he sat with his hands on his forehead,
Planning schemes for revenge in a manner most horrid.
Then he suddenly rose and exclaimed in a tone,
That by passion was stifled to nearly a moan,
“ Oh that brute of a Chamberlain—curse the old churl,
Could I have my revenge and then marry the girl ;
Had I five hundred souls, I would give every one ”——
Here he heard a low voice at his elbow say “ Done ! ”
“ Who the devil was that ? ” he called out, and in
spite
Of his natural hardihood, felt in a fright,
When he saw by the light
Of the lamp, which had suddenly flared up quite bright,
A little old man dress'd entirely in black,
With a bag the same colour, slung over his back,

When Sir Rowland exclaimed "Who the devil was that?"
His visitor, smiling and raising his hat,
Said, "Exactly, Sir Rowland, you've got it quite pat."
"What the deuce!"— "Yes, exactly—now what is
the matter?"
Every tooth the knight had was beginning to chatter—
And while in his fright each particular hair
Stood on end—he endeavoured to utter a prayer;
But his visitor coughed with so savage an air
That it died on his lips—and he sunk on the chair.
"Now really, Sir Rowland, do pray draw it mild—
A knight of your standing to act like a child;
Come, come, my dear friend, when we're better acquainted
You won't find me nearly so black as I'm painted.
My desire is to serve you, I think we can trade,
Say five hundred and fifty—the bargain is made."
"Five hundred and fifty, good heavens! of what?"
"Why, souls, my dear friend, they're not hard to be
got.
But don't use such language I wish you would *not*"—
"I don't understand you," Sir Rowland said, quaking
With fear at the turn which the subject was taking.
"Ah! you don't understand," said the little dark man,
"Well, my very dear friend—we'll explain if we can."
Then he opened the bag, set it down on the floor,
And began pulling documents out by the score.

Have you ever seen Frikell, or, one of his trade,
Mr Hellis, who showed up the medium Slade,
Pull impossible numbers of things from a hat,
Which before hadn't anything in it ? Well that,
Although very well done, would in interest flag,
Had you once seen the little dark gentleman's bag.
He kept pulling out papers and strewed them around,
He covered the table, he covered the ground ;
At last the right paper he seemed to have found,
For he passed one across to Sir Rowland Mackay,
And carefully stowing all the others away,
“There, my friend,” he exclaimed, “be so kind as to
read
This document over, and if we're agreed
As to terms,—why just put down your name at the
bottom,
What ! you want pen and ink—yes, exactly, I've got
'em.”

“What's this, ‘marry the girl, be revenged on the
father,
Have unlimited riches’—that's coming it rather,
On condition I send you before the year's end
Five hundred and fifty—what !” “Souls, my dear
friend.”

“The proposal’s your own, though I’ll own it sounds
funny,
But there’s nothing that cannot be purchased with
money ;
And when you’ve unlimited wealth at control,
You won’t find much trouble in buying a soul.”

“Avaunt !” cried Sir Rowland—“all this is a sell,
I never could pay such a debt—go to—— !” “Well,
Now really that isn’t polite, my young swell,
You won’t sign it—no—please yourself, very well !
Poor Alice—she likes you, but yet I dare say
I shall find her a husband—Sir Rowland, good-day.”
“Hold, hold,” cried Sir Rowland, “you mentioned
Miss Alice”—

“Exactly,” his guest replied, “come, I’ve no malice,
Excuse me, your finger’s beginning to bleed,
There’s a drop on your pen—there, subscribe to the
deed.”

“Oh, my eye ! I have done it,” exclaimed the young
knight,
“Exactly, but don’t go on—
If you want me just
And as for th
it.”

As the little man spoke, through the casement there
shone
The first streak of dawn, and the knight was alone.

PART II.

ON Sir Rowland Mackay
The very next day
The Lord Chamberlain called, his forgiveness to pray,
He knew he'd been rude—but he begged to retract
Every word he'd made use of—Sir Rowland, in fact,
Was a knight whose escutcheon had never a flaw,
And the man of all others for *his* son-in-law;
Hoped byegones would be byegones, and asked him, in
fine,
En famille with himself and his daughter to dine.

"Oh ! oh !" said Sir Rowland, "it's working, I see ;
Just fancy the Chamberlain coming to me !

Well, I'll make his fair daughter my Lady Mackay,
Then there'll be my revenge—and *the devil to pay!*"

A month from that day,

—and Mackay

self go

to re

nt

Where the wine was tossed off at a marvellous rate,
The Lord Chamberlain got into such a sad state,
That on turning to speak to the King ; in the place
Of one sov'reign he saw most distinctly a brace.
His Lordship had always been famed for his loyalty,
But he felt quite non-plussed at this duplicate royalty ;
He therefore requested the King to explain
Why "*his Mashy* had cutted *his Mashy* in twain.
His *Mashy* was giving a vasht deal of trouble,
By his *Mashy's* making his *Mashy* double."
Here he grew quite Melonian, doing his best to
Quote something beginning *εἰς κοίρανος ἵστω*.
And then with those wonderful powers of perception
Which drunken men have in unveiling deception,
He was sure some impostor was trying to do him,
But he flattered himself he could clearly "shee through
him,"
But which of the two
Was the "regular do,"
And which one was genuine, was more than he knew.
But *one* was an impostor, to that he could swear,
And his Lordship was sure he'd no business there ;
To use his own words, "He'd be blowed if he'd stand
Sush a rashkal as that at the mon'ch's right hand ;"
So to settle affairs, after numerous aims,
A bottle he threw at the head of King James.

Just fancy, an Alderman seated in state
At a grand civic banquet, expecting a plate
Of the very best turtle—who hears with a shock
That the Lord Mayor's provided him nothing but
“mock.”

Just fancy a rifleman recently made,
Whose intended has come out to see him parade,
When his captain exclaims in irascible tones,
“Fall out! you're not up in your drill, Mr. Jones.”

Just fancy a swell when he meets in the “Row”
That “sweet creature who last night enchanted him
so,”
And hears her exclaim as he does the polite,
“O Louise, dear, do look—there's a queer little fright.”

You may fancy all these, and a thousand such cases,
Where the heroes appear with extremely grim faces,
But you couldn't imagine the horror and rile
Displayed in the face of King James, all this while.

Next morning the Chamberlain ate a supply
Of an edible, vulgarly called “humble pie,”
But all to no purpose, too deep his disgrace,
His lordship was quickly turned out of his place,

And nothing, when once the King gave him the sack,
Could induce him to take the Lord Chamberlain back
Thus without any trouble himself, our young knight
had

Revenge on the person by whom he'd been slighted.

Sir Rowland Mackay,
And his Lady so gay,
(*Exigentia loci*, I hardly need say,
Made me finish the line in that lunatic way)
Lived in conjugal bliss for full many a day,
He entirely forgetting the debt he'd to pay.

Till one day, as he sat in his library chair,
And thought himself then
The most happy of men,
For his Lady had brought him a fine son and heir,
And he thought of the joy
He should feel when the boy
Grew a year or two older, and when he should see
The merry young reprobate perched on his knee.
But these and some fancies e'en pleasanter still
Were dispelled as he thought of his creditor's bill.

How sad is the heart when the hopes it hath cherish'd
Fade away like a flower when the summer is past,

When each fond emotion it clung to hath perished,
Dispelled like a bright dream too happy to last.

Sad, sad was the heart of Sir Rowland Mackay,
As all his bright fancies thus glided away,
When he thought of his actual horrid condition ;
If the bond wasn't paid he *must* go to perdition.

" Five hundred and fifty," he said with a groan,
" When I've only got one in the world that's my own—
No more with my wife and sweet infant to dwell,
But to go with that blackguard—it's all very well,
I can't bring my mind to so dreary a journey,
I'm sure it's not legal ! I'll ask an attorney."
He went to a Lawyer, a cunning old blade,
Who was famed for a boast which he frequently made,
" That at law he could vanquish the devil—though clever,
Old Lucifer wasn't a *match* for him ever."

As a man that is drowning will catch at a straw,
So our knight sought the aid of this man of the law.
Lawyer Dryfile, with calm and implacable face,
Heard the whole of his client's most difficult case.
" The old rascal," he said, " I'm afraid his claim's just,
We'll back out if we can—but we'll pay if we must—

Let it rest for a few days—we'll hit on a plan
To get the whip hand of the wretch if we can."

"Here's the deed, Master Dryfile," another voice cried,
He looked round with wonder, and saw by his side
A little dark gentleman holding a deed
Stretched out in his hand for the lawyer to read.

"Give it me in my hand," said old Dryfile the deep,
"I'm rather shortsighted—come let's have a peep."

The old gentleman smiled, "Catch a weasel asleep."

He replied, "I'm well up in the tricks of the law,
You can read as I hold it—you won't find a flaw."

When old Dryfile had all of the document read,
He turned himself round to Sir Rowland and said,
"I've examined the contract, I'm sorry to say, it
Is perfectly binding—and so you must pay it."

The little old gentleman chuckled with glee :

"Ha! ha!" he exclaimed, "there's no gammoning
me !

I'll call on you, sir, when the contract falls due ;
You'll have the souls ready—if not, I'll have you."

Old Dryfile as soon as he'd vanished from sight,
Very much to the wonder and rage of the knight,
Burst out laughing until he was ready to split,
And kept on till he nearly went into a fit.

At last, with a kind of hysterical sob,
Said "I think we shall get you well out of this job."

"Oh indeed," said Sir Rowland—"pray didn't you say
That nothing was left for me now but to pay?—
You know very well that's impossible quite."

"Not at all," said the lawyer, "we'll pay what is right."

"But how?" said Sir Rowland.—"That's easy enough,
Our friend thinks he's a very good lawyer—pooh! stuff!
When compared with myself he is only a muff."

When he bargained for souls the old chap never thought
To bind you to any particular sort.

Now in Billingsgate Market, without any trouble,
You could purchase enough if the number were double."

"Old fellow," Sir Rowland replied, "you're a brick!
I respect you extremely—come give us your paw.
To think after all I should diddle old Nick—
Well, I never till now knew the value of law!"

We'll skip over a month now and come to the day
On which the young knight had his piper to pay:
He sat in the room which we mentioned before,
Old Dryfile was with him, and down on the floor
Were the fish he had purchased to settle his score.

The knight and the lawyer were cosily seated,
Sipping their wine and smoking their clays;

For the edict forbidding tobacco was treated
With remarkably little respect in those days.

They smoked and they chatted and kept up the fun
Till the clock of a neighbouring turret struck one,
And ere the last echo grew faint on the ear
A voice they well knew said "Sir Rowland, I'm here!"
The lawyer turned round—slightly nodded his head
To the man with the black bag, and jokingly said,
"That's right—punctuality"—you know the rest :
"Have a pipe, my old chap, and a drop of the best.
But if you can't stop—why we'll settle your claim ;
There, take up that basket and go as you came."
The little dark gentleman glared at the pair
With a very bewildered and comical air ;
"For your basket," said he, "not a button I care.
I want either my souls—or that gentleman there."
"Well, there *are* the soles," the old lawyer returned,—
"You can them away, they've been very well earned."
The old gentleman opened the basket and saw
All the fish—and directly detected the flaw.
He saw he was *sold*, yet he thought he would try
To brazen it out—but the other was *fly*,
Up to moves and without the least *green in his eye*.
"So you won't take the tender we offer?" he said.
"No, I won't," was the answer, "I'll have *him* instead ;

You fancy you'll do me—you'll find that you can't,
Sir Rowland goes with me—I'm blessed if he sha'n't."

"There's that basket of fish, nothing else shall you
take,"

Old Dryfile replied, "and whenever you make
A contract in future—be more wide awake.

I'll give advice gratis—it's much the best plan
In such cases to have a professional man."

Old Nick wouldn't own himself beaten, but still he
Swore the knight should go off with him, will he or nill
he—

"Come, old chap," said the lawyer, "now don't be so
silly,

Dare only to touch him—and I'll bring an action
Against you at once for unlawful abstraction—
False imprisonment—larceny—fraud and exaction.
Your fish will all stink while proceedings are pending,
And you know you'll get nothing at all at the ending."

"Oh that's your game, is it?—by Jingo, I'm done,
One never knows how long a lawsuit may run,
And I'm much too far-sighted to enter on one,
But I must say I've been very shabbily treated :
Give us hold of the fish—here's the contract receipted."
Thus saying, and looking crest-fallen, old Nick,
Having taken the basket, at once cut his stick.

When the lawyer and knight found he'd quitted the
place,
And Sir Rowland had no more occasion to funk,
They did what is usual in every such case,
Got exceedingly merry—I wouldn't say drunk.
Sir Rowland, who still had the gold which the aid
Of old Dryfile had for him so snugly secured,
Very handsomely all his great services paid,
And an intimate friendship between them endured.

Sir Rowland Mackay, with fair Alice his wife,
Lived as happy as could be the rest of his life.
And every Mackay
That lived after his day
Impanelled his arms in the following way :—
A basket of soles with a pipe on the top, a
Field azure—supporters two barristers proper ;
Crest a knight who is quite
In a state of delight,
And assuming the posture called taking a sight ;
Whilst, engrossed on a long bill of costs for a scroll, is
The motto, *lux mihi quam splendida solis.**

* An imbecile imp from the realms of typography
Had printed this line with the following orthography :
“ Luck's my eye ! how splendid a sole is ! ”

MORAL.

You who this veracious relation shall read,
Never sign, without quite comprehending a deed.
If any one duns you, don't kick up a dust,
You should never back out of a debt that is just.
If a friend at his house should invite you to dine,
And beg you'll oblige him by passing the wine,
If you've any politeness at all in you, show it,—
Hand the bottle, my friend, don't by any means throw it.
If you're in for a scrape,
Of no matter what shape,
On a lawyer at once for advice you should call.
For all that, the best plan
(Provided you can),
Is not to get into a muddle at all.



NOTES.



NOTES.

Page 3.

THE MASNAVI is a poem in six long books, in which the whole system of Persian Mystic Theology is expounded. It was written in the thirteenth century of our era, by Maulána Jelál ud dín Rúmí, the founder of the Mevlaviyeh sect of Dervishes, better known in Europe as “Dancing Dervishes,” from the gyrations which they indulge in, in the course of their public acts of worship. The professors of these mystic tenets are called Súfis, and their system constitutes the esoteric doctrine of Islam. It is a strange combination of the pantheism of the Aryan races, and of the severe monotheism of their semitic conquerors, and aims at leading men to the contemplation of spiritual things by appealing to their emotions. The keynote of the system is that the human soul is an emanation from God, and that it is always seeking and yearning to rejoin the source from whence it sprung. Ecstasy is the means by which a nearer intercourse is obtained, total absorption in the divinity the ultimate object to be attained.

Page 5, line 21.

Moses erewhile fell fainting at the sight
Of that fierce flame descended from above,
Which thrilled the very mountain with affright.

Cf. Koran vii. 139. “But when his Lord appeareth with glory in the mount, He reduceth it to dust. And Moses fell down fainting.”

Page 6, line 7.

But the sad nightingale, who sits alone
Upon the rose tree, singeth still, how fair
The tender blossoms and the sweet young flowerets were.

The Bulbul in Eastern poetry is always fabled to be in love with the rose, and its plaintive note is supposed to be a lamentation for unrequited passion.

Page 11, line 16.

Ghàtifar ; name of a certain quarter in Samarcand.

Page 12, line 11.

'Azrael ; the Angel of Death.

Page 14, line 4.

So when that ancient prophet Khizr slew
A youth tho' unprovok'd in word or deed,
Not even Moses, Heaven's own spokesman, knew
That Heaven's justice caused the lad to bleed.

Moses is called in the Koran Kelím Allah, he who spake with God. Khizr is in the Muslim legend confounded both with the Prophet Elias and with Alexander, who is called Zu'l Karnain, "The Two Horned;" he is also made a contemporary of Moses. The story alluded to is that given in the 18th chapter of the Koran; where Moses, seeking instruction from his more experienced brother prophet, is astonished at some apparently outrageous acts committed by the latter; but which are subsequently explained to be quite just and proper. Amongst these incidents is the murder of a youth who, however, turned out to have merited his fate.

Page 17, line 20.

The Abdals—The Abdals are seven mysterious beings, supposed to move in an orbit round the earth, each of whom exercises a guardianship over one of the zones.

Page 21, line 17.

Museilima was a contemporary of Mohammed and his rival in pretensions to the prophetic office. Ahmied is synonymous with Mohammed.

Page 24, line 18.

“Asleep yet waking.” See Koran ch. xviii. v. 17. “And thou wouldest think them waking even as they sleep.”

Page 25, line 10.

Then, like the angel who presides at birth,
He who divideth light from darkness brings
The spirits back from their late wanderings.

The angel who presides over birth is Isráfil. In Koran ch. vi. v. 96. God is called “Cleaver of the Dawn.”

Page 25, line 18.

The companions of the cave, *i.e.*, the seven sleepers of Ephesus, whose story is related in the 18th chapter of the Koran.

Page 25, line 21.

Ah if no “seal were set upon thine eye
And on thine ear.”

Cf. Koran ch. ii. v. 6. “God hath set a seal upon their hearts and ears, and in their eyes is dimness.”

Page 26, line 4.

Majnún.—Cais of the tribe of ’Amer is a celebrated hero of Eastern romance. He went mad through love of a girl called Lailá or Lailif whence his *sobriquet* of *majnún* or “crazy.” The young lady was not of prepossessing appearance, hence the monarch’s remark.

Page 28, line 10.

Whoso extinguisheth the candle's light
Leaveth his soul in spiritual night.

*Kαὶ πάλι, δτι οἱ τοῦ λόγου, τὰ τοῦ σκέπου πράττειν βουλόμενοι,
σβεννύονται μεν τὸ φῶς, ἐκαστος δὲ τῇ παρατυχεῖσῃ μίγνυται.*
Origen. *Contra Celsum*, Lib. vi.

Page 29, line 1.

Christ could "make scarlet white as snow."

The Mushins taking the words literally, assert that Our Lord exercised the trade of a dyer.

Page 30, line 17.

Whose soul was present on that primal day
When angels did to Adam their adoration pay.

This refers to the doctrine of predestination inculcated by the Mohammedan religion. In remote eternity, God created man, and breathed His spirit into the senseless form of Adam, which He had created out of clay. Adam then sneezed, and awaking to life exclaimed, "Praise be to God!" The angel Gabriel who was by, replied, "God have mercy upon Adam!" All the angels were then commanded to prostrate themselves before Adam, which they did, "all save Iblis, who refused, and became puffed up with pride." (Koran, ii. v. 32.) Then God drew forth from the loins of Adam all the men that should live on the earth to the remotest generation, so that all the posterity of Adam were present before God, in the form of infinitesimal ants, endowed with reason. They were made to confess the existence and unity of God, and then returned to their molecular state. The life of each was written, also, together with all the events of the world's history, upon the Eternal tablet, by the Pen, which is the Spirit of God, the primeval element of the universe.

Page 38, line 19.

Here shalt thou learn the mystery
Of Ibrahim, whom Nimrod threw
Into a fiery furnace.

This story is also told in the 21st chapter of the Koran, v. 52. seq. Abraham was persecuted by Nimrod for refusing to worship idols, and was cast by the tyrant into a fiery furnace. The fire, however, did not harm the patriarch, and the embers turned to roses.

Page 39, line 18.

In Persian, *Bahmán* is the name of a month in mid-winter, and also of a fire-demon.

Page 42, line 4.

The prophet was to Yemen sent,
To bid the men of 'Ad repent.

The tribe of Ad refused to believe in the mission of the prophet Hud, and were in consequence destroyed by a piercing wind, Kor. xii. v. 5. The prophet, however, drew a charmed circle round a select few who were unharmed in the midst of the storm.

Page 42, line 20.

Christ breathed upon the birds of clay,
And, lo! they breathed and flew away.

This legend, which is borrowed from the apocryphal "Gospel of the Infancy," is told in the 3rd chapter of the Koran, v. 43.

Page 44.

Hafiz, the national lyric poet of Persia, was born at Shíráz in the early part of the fourteenth century of our era, and died in A.D. 1388. He adopted at an early age the career of a dervish; but although he remained a member of the order all his lifetime, he by no means adhered to the rigid principles of asceticism which his fellow-dervishes assumed.

His works consist of about 700 poems, chiefly short odes, the apparent themes of which are love and wine, but which are referred by the Sufis to their own mystical conception of the divine love and attributes.

Page 55.

AUHAD UD DIN ANVARI was born in a village near Mahnah, in the plains of Kháwarán, in the province of Abíward. His original *takhallus*, or poetical surname, was Kháwari, which he changed to Anvari by the advice of his teacher 'Umárah. His early life was spent in poverty, but he at length attracted the notice of Sultan Sanjar, and became one of the most famous poets of his court. Sultan Sanjar was the sixth monarch of the Seljúk dynasty ; he had been for several years governor of Khorassan, but in A.D. 1117 he became Sultan, on the death of his brother Muhammad, and reigned for forty years. His reign is a glorious era in Persian history, as he was a munificent patron of literature ; but it closed in disgrace and ruin.

A colony of the Turkmán tribe of Ghuzz had been allowed to settle near Balkh, but had revolted against the oppression of the governor. The Sultan determined to support his officer's authority, and marched with an army to suppress the insurrection ; but his troops were defeated, and he himself became a prisoner. He remained nearly four years a captive, and was treated with great barbarity, but he at length made his escape. He had, however, hardly reached his capital, Merv, when he died in 1157 (A.H. 552), in his seventy-third year. At his death, his empire fell into fragments, which were seized by different branches of his family, or by independent chiefs. His nephew Ruknuddín Mahmúd, who was the son of a sister married to the descendant of a great chief of Turkistán, held Khorassan for a few years, and fixed his capital at Samarcand ; but he was afterwards dethroned and blinded by one of his ministers. It was to this prince that Anvari probably addressed the following poem.

Anvari died at Balkh in A.H. 586 (A.D. 1190).

Page 56, line 13.

Túrán is Trans-Oxiana as opposed to 'Irán, Cis-Oxiana.

Page 56, line 15.

Kaiyumers, Kusrá, Manúchehr, and Afrídán, are the names of ancient kings in the legendary history of Persia.

Page 57, line 25.

Room and Khata, *i.e.*, the Byzantine Empire and Cathay.

Page 60, line 25.

Longs as the morn longs for the rising sun.

The loves of the sun and moon are a commonplace in Persian poetry.

Page 61, line 14.

And still the credit of his name maintained.

Alluding to the signification of his name, Kemál-ud-dín, “The perfection of the faith.”

Page 62, line 17.

Amák of Bokhara was one of the most eminent poets at the court of Sultan Sanjar, and was chiefly renowned for his pathetic elegiacs. One of these, upon a daughter of Sultan Sanjar, who died young, is still quoted and admired.

Page 64, line 10.

O Fate, you should learn to be stable
From the mythical anka's career,
Not to shift like the crow in the fable,
Which changes its sex every year.

The anka is a fabulous bird supposed to sit for all eternity, wrapped in silent contemplation, on Mount Káf, the utmost limits of the world.

The superstition about the crow also attaches to the rabbit, and some other animals.

Page 65, line 16.

The Khaibari Jews are so called from Khaibar, a town near Mecca, where they had settled before Mohammed's time. They are believed, on good authority, to be the descendants of those Rechabites mentioned in Jeremiah xxxv. 2. They are now the terror of the pilgrim caravans.

Page 66, line 21.

'Tis like Sámári's natural magic.

Mohammedan legends ascribe the making of the Golden Calf to a certain Sámári instead of to Aaron, and add, that he caused it to bleat like a living calf, by casting upon it some dust which he had picked up from under the hoofs of Gabriel's steed when that archangel led the Egyptian hosts to their destruction at the passage of the Red Sea.

Page 67, line 7.

Hamíd-ud-dín, signifies, "laudable in the faith."

Page 69, line 17.

The heirs of the prophets, *i.e.*, rare phenomena, for Mohammed said, "We prophets have no heirs."

Page 70, line 2.

Pegasus; in the original, Rakhush, the celebrated horse of Rustam the Persian Hercules.

Page 70, line 17.

The proof of a Solomon's reckoned,
To lie in the ring of his Song.

Alluding to the legend that Solomon was for sometime deprived of his kingdom by a demon who surreptitiously obtained possession of his magical ring.

Page 70, line 23.

Azar, the father of Abraham, was a celebrated maker of graven images. Koran, vi. 74.

Page 71, line 18.

The libel on him has been tacked.

A libellous poem called the *Khar Námah*, or "Book of Asses," had been circulated and ascribed by some of his detractors to Anwari.

Page 73, line 19.

Tangarí is the Mongol, and Yezdán the old Persian name for God. The former word is not in any of the modern dictionaries, although it occurs in D'Herbelot.

Page 74, line 17.

His anger with meteors smiteth
The demon who dare to aspire.

The Mohammedans believe that meteors are brands hurled by angels against the demons whom they find eaves-dropping at the gates of heaven.

Page 74, line 19.

The least that delighteth
To dwell in the midst of the fire.

i.e., The Salamander.

Page 75, line 1.

Thus Adam rebelled, &c.

Koran, xx. 119-120. "Thus Adam rebelled against his Lord, afterwards He approved his repentance, and was turned unto him and directed him."

Page 75, line 5.

Ere Noah had his “leave them not” spoken.

Koran, lxxi. 27. “And Noah said, Lord, leave not any families of the unbelievers on the earth.”

Page 75, line 11.

He turneth the fire into roses.

Alluding to the legend that when Abraham (who is always called Khalil Allah, the Friend of God) was cast into the fire by Nimrod, for ridiculing the idolatrous worship of his fellow-countrymen, the burning pile was miraculously changed into a bed of roses.

Page 75, line 17.

The markings of motherhood’s honour
He drew upon Miriam’s face.

Oriental women consider the tattooing of the face as a great ornament.

Page 75, line 21.

The shoulder of Ahmed His chosen,
The stamp of a prophet revealed.

Mohammed is said to have borne “the seal of prophecy” between his shoulders, that is, a natural mark in the shape of a seal containing the Muslim profession of faith : “There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God.” *Ahmed* is a name of Mohammed.

Amongst the sayings traditionally attributed to him is the following : “There is no prophet after me.” The Muslims therefore speak of him as “the last of the prophets.”

Page 76, line 1.

He beckons the moon, and dissolving
Apart into crescents it flies.

One of the miracles attributed to Mohammed is the *Shakk el Kamar* or “the division of the moon” into two parts at

his bidding. In the present verse the two crescents are likened to curls, and the whole disc of the moon to a mirror.

Page 76, line 7.

Behold the sleek reptile proclaiming
His office divine.

The prophet was one day standing in the midst of an assemblage of his followers, when a certain Bedawí, who had caught a lizard and was carrying it home, passed by. On learning that the object of attraction was a person who claimed to be the Prophet of God, he approached the assembly, and addressing Mohammed, declared that if it would not expose him to the charge of rashness, he would slay him. "For," said he, "thou art the greatest liar that ever woman bore."

Omar, enraged at this vituperative language, besought Mohammed to allow him to kill the Bedawí; but the former reproved his haste, saying that the merciful man was half a prophet himself. On this the Bedawí drew the lizard from his sleeve and threw it at the prophet, adding that "he would believe upon him when that lizard did, and not till then." The reptile immediately acknowledged the truth of Mohammed's mission in plain Arabic, and the Bedawí, convinced by the miracle, became one of the prophet's most devoted followers. *Damírí Haiyát el Haiwán el Kubrá*.—Boulak, ^{and} edition, vol. ii. p. 94.

Page 77, line 14.

An atom on Kháwari ground.

The poet was born at Kháwarán, from which he took the sobriquet of Kháwari, which he subsequently changed to Anwari, "shining."

Page 78, line 23.

If they can't find a spot on the poet,
They will on the pard.

In Persian, *Nukta girifstan*, "to criticise sharply," literally signifies "to find spots."

Page 79, line 9.

Koran, xiii. 5. And they said, Dhu'l Karnain (Sikandar or Alexander), verily Gog and Magog waste the land, and shall we, therefore, pay thee tribute, on condition that thou build a rampart between us and them ? He answered, I will set a strong wall between you and them.

[Page 80.]

With a Násir and Togral Takín at
The head of the state.

The last mentioned is probably Toghral bin Arslán, the last of the Seljúkian dynasty, who reigned 571–590 A.H.

A Násir-ed-din seems from this to have been the local governor of Balkh ; it is, however, quite possible that the reference is to Násir-ed-dín, the then caliph of Baghdad, though the latter appears to have been hostile to Sultán Toghral.

Page 81.

Omar el Kheiyám, was born in the year 1042 of the Christian era. He was a great mathematician as well as a poet, and is the inventor of the science of algebra. Amongst his early associates was Hassan Sabah, the founder of the famous sect of the *Hasháshín* or Assassins, and familiarly spoken of in the contemporary histories of the Crusades as "The Old Man of the Mountain." Omar el Kheiyám was an advanced free-thinker, and his *quatrains* are some of the most striking compositions in Persian poetry.

Page 83.

The Simurgh.—See note to page 64 line 10 on the 'Anka.

Page 85.

Hussein Váiz Káshífi, was a celebrated Súfi writer of the 14th century. He wrote an abridgement of the *Masnaví* of Mauláná Rúmí, but is best known in Europe for his Persian Version of the Fables of the Indian Sage Pilpai.

Page 85, line 15.

Who dwell by Silsabil's blest streams above.

Silsabil is the name of a fountain in paradise.

Page 85, line 16.

Iram is the name of an earthly paradise constructed in the centre of Arabia, by Sheddad, Prince of Yemen. For this impious folly he was destroyed by divine vengeance, and his paradise was made to disappear. It is, however, occasionally revealed to lonely travellers for a moment.

Page 86, line 7.

O'er earth's great conqueror such enchantment threw.

Nûri Jâhdîn (Light of the World), the same as Moore's *Nûr Mahall*. She was the wife of *Jehângîr* (World-conqueror), who raised the splendid mausoleum to her memory, called the *Tâjî Mahall* at Agra.

Page 88, line 12.

The great archangel on "the night of power."

Lailat al cadr, vide Korán, ch. xcvi. "Verily we revealed the Korán on the night of power."

Page 90.

Firdausi, justly styled the Homer of Persia, is chiefly known to us through his grand epic poem, the *Shâh-nâmeh* or Book of Kings, a legendary history of Persia from the remotest times. He was born in the district of Toos in Khorassan about the year 932 A.D. His name was Abu'l Casim Mansûr, and he is said to have assumed the *nom de plume* of Firdausi, from the circumstance that his father was superintendent of a garden called *Firdaus* "Paradise" belonging to the governor of Toos.

When Sultan Mahmûd of Ghazneh came to the throne in A.D. 998, he expressed a desire to complete the great undertaking of his predecessor, namely, to arrange and versify the ancient historical records of Iran, which had been collected during the preceding reigns. Ibu Mansûr had assigned this task to the poet Dakiki, who was, however, assassinated by

one of his own slaves before the work had reached the extent of a thousand verses. This event seems to have first suggested to Firdausi the idea of his grand work, the Shah-námeh, which he pursued with great energy for some years, the materials being supplied from a Pehlavi treatise composed by his friend Mohammed Lashkari. Hearing subsequently that Sháh Mahmúd had committed seven parts of the ancient chronicles to as many poets for versification, Firdausi undertook a journey to Ghazneh in the hope of procuring a share in the monarch's patronage. The version of the episode of Rustam and Sohráb by the poet Ansari, had just gained the palm, and was then the theme of universal admiration at court. On his arrival at Ghazneh he alighted at a garden where three of the seven poets were holding a convivial *al fresco* entertainment. In accordance with the free and easy etiquette of the East, which allows of a stranger joining a party without any other invitation than that of the tempting appearance of the viands themselves, he approached them with the intention of "making himself at home." The poets laureate wishing to get rid of him without rudeness, informed him who they were, and told him that it was their custom to admit none to their society, but such as could give proof of poetic talent, and imposed upon him the task of completing an extemporary verse of which each should furnish a line with the same rhyme. Firdausi accepted the challenge, and the three poets having previously arranged upon three rhyming words to which a fourth could not be found in the Persian language, 'Ansari began :—

Thy beauty eclipses the light of the sun,

Farrakhí added—

The rose with thy cheek would comparison shun ;

'Asjadí continued—

Thy glances pierce through the mailed warrior's joshun ;*

And Firdausi, without a moment's hesitation, completed the quatrain—

Like the lance of fierce Giv in his fight with Poshun.

The poets asked for an explanation of this allusion, and

* A sort of cuirass.

Firdausi recited to them the battle as described in the Sháhnámeh, and delighted them with his eloquence and learning. It so chanced that Mahak, one of the Sultan's officers, was present ; he was so charmed with Firdausi, that he took him to court, where his transcendent genius soon procured for him the patronage and esteem of Mahmúd. The latter assigned him apartments in the palace, and entrusted to him the task of versifying the ancient records already mentioned, directing that he should receive one thousand *miscals* of gold for every thousand verses. From some unexplained cause, Firdausi preferred receiving the reward in one sum on the completion of his work ; a most unfortunate choice for himself, as it led to his subsequent downfall and miseries. A little time before the poem was finished—it cost him thirty years' labour, as he himself tells us—

After thirty years of toil
My Persian brightens Persia's soil.

A dispute arose between him and Mehmándí, one of Mahmúd's most influential courtiers. This person, by dint of misrepresentations and accusations against the poet of heresy and partiality for the fire-worshippers and Sufis, succeeded in prejudicing the Sultan's mind against him. The verse upon which the charge of heresy was founded, was the following—

The height and depth of all the world is centred, Lord, in Thee ;
I know not what Thou art—Thou art what Thou alone canst be !

The monarch's fanaticism and prejudice being once aroused, he was easily induced to send him sixty thousand silver *drachms* (about £2600) in place of the golden *miscal*s he had promised. Firdausi was in the bath when the messenger arrived with the money, and in a fit of indignation divided the gift between the bath-keeper and the man who served the sherbet. On Firdausi's conduct being reported to Mahmúd, he was furious, and ordered the poet to be trampled to death on the following morning by elephants ; but in abject terror, he threw himself at the Sultan's feet and obtained mercy. Filled, however, with rage and fear, Firdausi prepared for flight, having first given vent to his feelings in a spirited satire of which the commencement is given in the text. This satire he confided to Ayaz, a great favourite with

Mahmud, and an intimate acquaintance of his own, with instructions to show it to the Sultan, when he himself should have got safely out of the kingdom. After visiting several courts, he at last reached Tabristan, where Nasir, the sovereign of the country, not only received him kindly, but sent a petition to Mahmud interceding on the aged poet's behalf. Just before the petition arrived, Mahmud had discovered some verses written by Firdausi, lamenting his disappointed hopes and unjust treatment. These circumstances combined to soften the Sultan's heart towards him, and he accordingly despatched a messenger to Toos, whither the poet had repaired, bearing not only a free pardon, but a present worthy of his genius. But the reparation came too late ; Firdausi, now a broken-hearted, decrepit, old man, while wandering through the streets of his native town, heard a child lisping the verse from his own satire, in which he taunts Mahmud with his slavish birth—

Had Mahmud's father been what he is now,
A crown of gold had decked this aged brow ;
Had Mahmud's mother been of royal blood,
In heaps of silver knee-deep had I stoo'd.

He was so affected by this proof of universal sympathy with his sufferings, that he went home, fell sick, and died.

Page 92, line 6.

The *Kamand* is a kind of lasso, similar to those used in South America.







